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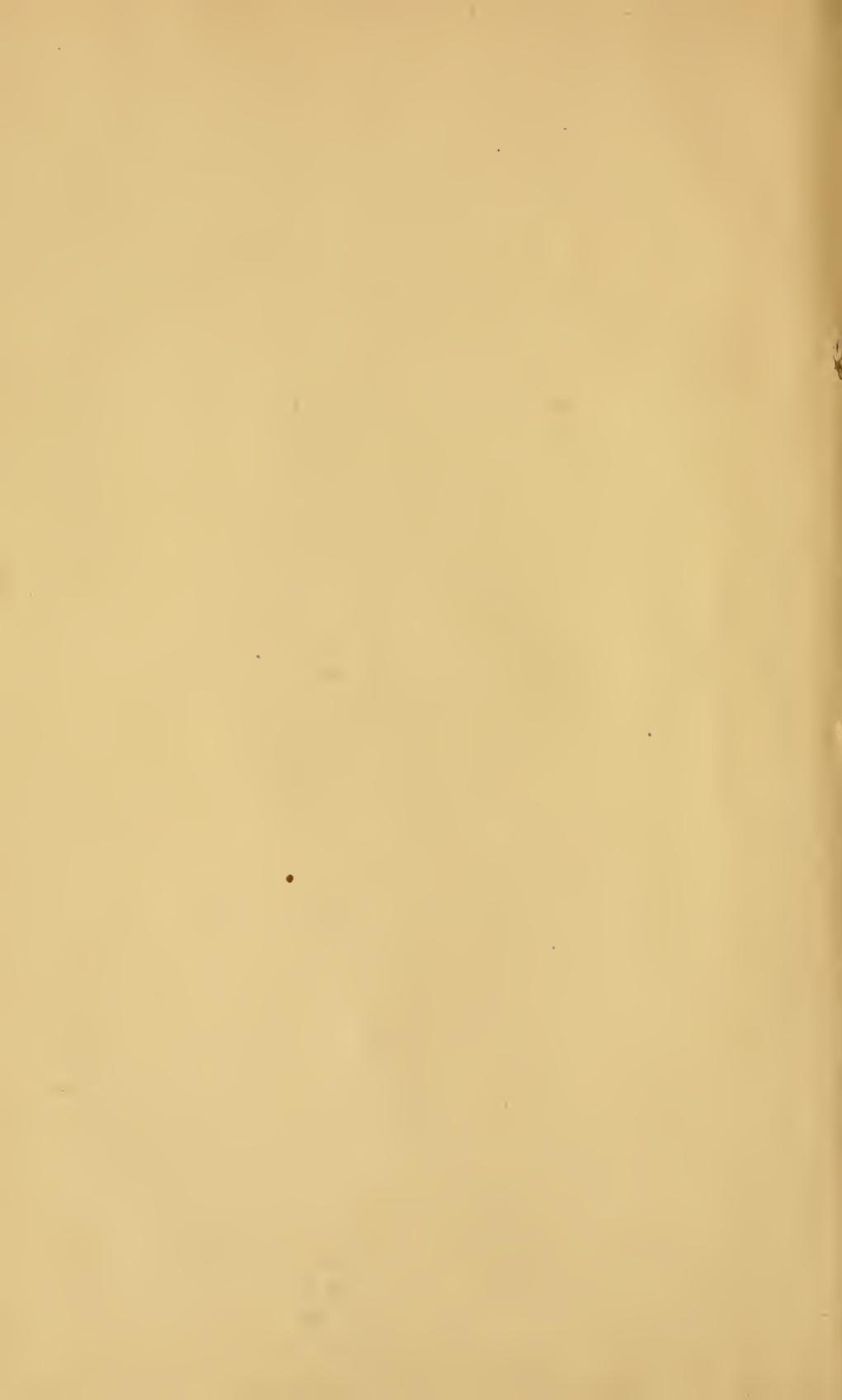
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J. S. Wor

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# GROSS LITERARY FRAUD

## EXPOSED;

†6588.40

RELATING TO THE PUBLICATION OF

*E. Worcester, Joseph Emerson*

## WORCESTER'S DICTIONARY

IN

L O N D O N.

*E. Worcester*

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BOSTON:

JENKS, HICKLING, AND SWAN.

1853.

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From  
C. W. C. Jr.

Aug. 2. 1867.

Cambridge, September 30, 1853.

MESSRS. JENKS, HICKLING, & SWAN:—

GENTLEMEN,— The fact that an edition of my “ Universal and Critical Dictionary of the English Language,” with a *false title and a garbled and mutilated preface*, has been published in London, has recently come to my knowledge; and I have had some correspondence on the subject with Mr. Wilkins, of the late firm of Wilkins, Carter, & Co., the original publishers of the Dictionary. As you are now the publishers of it, I send this correspondence to you, together with a correction of some false statements relating to myself, which the publishers of Dr. Webster’s Dictionary have made and circulated very widely, with a request that you will get these matters printed and put in circulation, in order that this literary fraud may be exposed. I am sorry to have occasion to make such a request; but it seems proper that something should be done; and it is my wish that such a course may be adopted as may tend to set matters right, as far as the case admits.

I do not wish any thing ever to be said or done, in order to promote the circulation of my literary publications, that is not in strict accordance with truth and propriety, or that can give reasonable offence to any one. The world is wide enough, and the demand for useful books sufficient, to give employment to all literary laborers, who make use of proper means for preparing books which will promote the improvement of society; and I see no good reason for hostile contention between those who make such books, or between those who sell them.

Respectfully yours,

J. E. WORCESTER.



## LITERARY FRAUD EXPOSED.

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Cambridge, August 24, 1853.

JOHN H. WILKINS, Esq.:—

DEAR SIR,—Not long since I saw, in an English journal, an advertisement of a Dictionary published in London, in the title of which my name was connected with that of Dr. Noah Webster, in a way that I did not understand, and could not account for; and in the Boston Daily Advertiser, of the 5th instant, there is a communication with the signature of G. & C. Merriam, the publishers of Webster's Dictionary, from which the following paragraphs are extracted:—

“Mr. Worcester having been employed by Dr. Webster or his family, to abridge the American Dictionary of the English Language, some years afterwards, and subsequently to Dr. Webster's death, in presenting to the public a Dictionary of his own, of the same size as the Abridgment prepared by him of Webster, says in his Preface, that he 'is not aware of having taken a single word, or the definition of a word' from Webster in the preparation of his work.

“Now mark this fact. An edition of Worcester's Dictionary has recently been published in London, and sought to be pushed there, in which the paragraph we have cited is carefully suppressed, and is advertised as 'Webster's Critical and Pronouncing Dictionary, &c., enlarged and revised by Worcester.' On the title-page Webster is

placed first, in large type, and Worcester follows in another line in smaller type; and the book is lettered on the back ‘Webster’s and Worcester’s Dictionary’!”

Now this was new and surprising to me; for I did not know that my Dictionary had been published in London. Since seeing this statement, I have called three or four times at your office in Boston to make inquiry of you respecting the matter; but did not find you in till yesterday. I had, however, seen Mr. Rice, who was lately connected with you in business, and he told me that the Dictionary had been published in London, and that he believed you had a copy of the London edition. On seeing you yesterday, you said that you had a copy, and that you would send it to me. I have this morning received it; and I am astonished to find that the title is as follows:—

“ *A Universal, Critical, and Pronouncing Dictionary of the English Language: including Scientific Terms, compiled from the materials of NOAH WEBSTER, LL. D. By JOSEPH E. WORCESTER.—New Edition, to which are added Walker’s Key to the Pronunciation of Classical and Scripture Proper Names, enlarged and improved; a Pronouncing Vocabulary of Modern Geographical Names; and an English Grammar.* London: Henry G. Bohn, 4, 5, and 6 York Street, Covent Garden.”

The true title of my Dictionary is as follows:—

“ *A Universal and Critical Dictionary of the English Language: to which are added Walker’s Key to the Pronunciation of Classical and Scripture Proper Names, much enlarged and improved; and a Pronouncing Vocabulary of Modern Geographical Names.* By JOSEPH E. WORCESTER.”

I find that the *Preface* is garbled and much altered; and several omissions are made. One of the matters omitted in it is the following statement, viz.:—“ *With respect to Webster’s Dictionary, which the compiler several*

*years since abridged, he is not aware of having taken a single word, or the definition of a word, from that work in the preparation of this."*

I do not know that the truth of this statement has ever been explicitly denied, and I do know that it has never been disproved. You will see how inconsistent—how false and injurious—is the statement in the Title of the London edition,—“*compiled from the materials of Noah Webster*”! The person who remodelled the Title and Preface of the London edition, must have known that he was contradicting the statement which I made in my Preface; and the publishers of Webster’s Dictionary are endeavoring to make use of this dishonest proceeding of the London publisher to my injury, and in such a manner as no honorable or honest men would do, if they knew the facts in the case.

I would now ask, what is to be done in this matter? You will not suppose that I ought to feel satisfied to have it remain uncontradicted; yet I am very averse to appear before the public in any controversy relating to a publication of my own. You are aware, as well as other persons who have been concerned in publishing works which I have prepared for the press, that my habit has been to leave my books to the management of the publishers, without defending them from any attack, or doing any thing to injure any works that may come in competition with them; nor do I wish ever to deviate from this course.

As I have no pecuniary interest in the London edition of the Dictionary, I think I am entitled to be protected from being injured by it in this manner; and as you have made the contract, if there has been one made, with the London publisher, I must call your attention to the subject; and I do so in full confidence that you will wish to have the matter set right, and have no wrong done to any one.

Truly yours,

J. E. WORCESTER.

Boston, August 31, 1853.

MR. WORCESTER:—

DEAR SIR,— Your favor of the 24th instant came duly to hand, but I have not had leisure until now to answer it.

Early in 1847, Mr. James Brown, of the firm of Little, Brown, & Co. of this city, was about to visit Europe; and we (Wilkins, Carter, & Co.) authorized him to negotiate for the publication of your Dictionary in England if he had opportunity, and particularly with Mr. Bohn, from whom we had received an application for the privilege. Subsequently Mr. Brown informed us of an offer he had received from Mr. Bohn, and furnished us with the letter from Mr. Bohn to him; to the proposals in which we acceded, and in October of that year shipped the plates to London.

I remember perfectly well that we felt some doubt in regard to the validity of a contract made on paper not bearing a stamp; but we supposed Mr. Bohn was an honorable man, and would not repudiate it.

After shipping the plates we heard nothing from Mr. Bohn until the next year, when we became somewhat impatient of the delay, and we wrote him urging him to go on in fulfilment of his agreement. We received an answer stating that he was sorry the plates had been sent. And we learned that he had become interested in the sale of Webster's Dictionary. Several letters passed between him and us, but we were unable to induce him to fulfil his agreement.

In the autumn of 1849, more than two years after the plates were sent, Mr. Carter went to Europe for his health,—intending to see Mr. Bohn and come to some arrangement with him. But his health did not allow of this. In the summer or autumn of 1850, Mr. Bohn wrote us asking our lowest terms to sell the plates, which I named,—never dreaming that any other use would be made of them than that of publishing your Dictionary under your

name. He accepted my offer, and the transfer of the plates was effected.

On Mr. Carter's return from Italy, in the summer of 1851, he brought home a copy of his (Mr. Bohn's) bare-faced publication. You can judge of our surprise, I might say amazement, at the audacity of this literary fraud. We felt very uncomfortable about it, but did not see that any thing could be done to remedy the evil. Mr. Carter was never afterwards able to attend to business, and the subject of this publication was never further considered between us.

You may well think it strange that I did not at the time call your attention to the subject of this literary imposition; but as I did not see any means of remedying the evil, and knowing that the condition of your eyes was such that you could make but little if any use of them, I did not feel in haste to trouble you with a knowledge of it. I have, however, never seen any notice of this spurious publication in this country, until you called my attention to one. Had any such notice met my eye, I should certainly have deemed it my duty to call your attention to the volume brought home by Mr. Carter.

Had I leisure to narrate the details of our business transaction with Mr. Bohn, I think it would appear to be, on his part, as commercially dishonorable, as this literary enterprise is fraudulent and disgraceful.

Your obedient servant,

JOHN H. WILKINS.

In my letter to Mr. Wilkins, I say, in relation to the statement that "I am not aware of having taken a single word, or the definition of a word, from Dr. Webster's Dictionary, in the preparation of mine," that "I do not know that the truth of this statement had ever been explicitly denied." But the title of the London edition states that my Dictionary was "*compiled from the materials of Noah Webster*"!— and the publishers of Webster's Dictionary

seem to insinuate very strongly, in the paragraphs which I have quoted, as they have also done on other occasions, that the statement is not correct. But if there is a word or the definition of a word that was, in the preparation of my Dictionary, taken from that of Dr. Webster, I am ignorant of the fact. Having had some knowledge of Dr. Webster's readiness to complain of improper use being made of his work,\* I resolved that, *in preparing my Dictionary, I would forego all the benefit which might be derived from the use of the materials found in his work, so that I might not give the least occasion for an accusation of the kind, and might be enabled to make the statement which I did make, and which I challenge any one to disprove.*

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Having felt it incumbent on me to expose the dishonest proceedings of the London publisher, it may not be improper for me to notice some other false statements, designed to injure me, which the publishers of Webster's Dictionary have repeatedly made and widely circulated. As these statements have not been publicly contradicted, they have doubtless done me injury in the minds of many.

The quotation above made from their communication to the Boston Daily Advertiser begins thus:—"Mr. Worcester having been employed by Dr. Webster or his family to abridge the American Dictionary of the English Language";—and in their Advertising Pamphlet they say, "Mr. Worcester was employed by Dr. Webster or his family to prepare an Abridgment of the American Dictionary,"—accompanying the statement with injurious reflections. As this statement has been so often made in a form designed to do me injury, and as it is doubtless true that many persons may have been made to believe that there was something wrong or dishonorable on my part, I think it proper that the public should have the means of knowing the facts in the case.

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\* See Appendix.

The statement that I "was employed by Dr. Webster or his family to abridge the American Dictionary," is void of truth. The gentleman who employed me was Sherman Converse, Esq., the original publisher of Dr. Webster's Dictionary. So far was the task from being one of my own seeking, that I declined two applications that were made to me to undertake it, and one reason was the fear that it would bring me into some difficulty or embarrassment in relation to the "Comprehensive Dictionary," which I was then preparing; but the matter was urged upon me by Mr. Converse, after I had stated my objections. If any one shall say that I committed an error in judgment in finally consenting to make the abridgment, I shall certainly, on that point, not contend with him, for it has been to me a matter of much regret that I did so, as may readily be believed from what has taken place. But I am conscious of having acted in good faith in the matter, and of not having deserved ill treatment from Dr. Webster or his friends.

After seeing the publication above referred to in the Daily Advertiser, I sent a copy of it to Mr. Converse, (whom I had seen but once, I believe, for more than fifteen years,) accompanying it with a letter, in which I requested him to give a brief statement of the facts in the case; and I received from him the following letter:—

Newburgh, N. Y., August 31, 1853.  
MR. WORCESTER:—

DEAR SIR,— Having been absent from New York for several weeks, I have but just received your favor of the 12th instant, with a copy of the Boston Daily Advertiser accompanying it. I have read the article in the Advertiser, in which your name is coupled with that of the octavo abridgment of Mr. Webster's larger work. Authors are sometimes sensitive, but really I do not think you have much occasion for anxiety in regard to your reputation, either personal or literary. But since you ask me

to say whether I "know of any thing wrong or dishonorable on your part in relation to that Abridgment," I answer, *Nothing whatever.*

The simple history of the whole matter is this. I had published Mr. Webster's great Dictionary, and presented it to the public. The labor had cost from two to three years of the best portion of my business life, without any adequate remuneration. For this I looked to an Abridgment, and such future editions of the larger work as the demand might authorize. But if I published an Abridgment, I wished to stereotype it, and, as a business man, I desired it to be made by an able hand, and with some variations, of minor importance, from the original. On conferring with Mr. Webster upon the subject, he stated two objections to my views. He felt that he had not the physical power left to perform the labor in a reasonable time, and that he could not preserve his literary consistency and be responsible for the variations which I desired. Yet, as I had published the great work after it had been declined, and that not very graciously, by all the principal booksellers on both sides of the Atlantic, he was willing that I should derive any remuneration I might anticipate from an octavo abridgment. With these views and feelings, he consented to commit the subject to the mutual discretion of Professor Goodrich and myself; setting a limit, however, beyond which variations should not be made; and that he might not incur the least responsibility for such variations as the abridgment might contain, I understood him to say, he should give the copyright to another.

As soon as Mr. Webster had made his decision, which was probably a sacrifice of feeling on his part to do me a favor, I applied to *you* to undertake the labor. You declined, and so decidedly that I made a visit to Cambridge for the sole purpose of urging your compliance with my request. You assured me that you could not undertake to abridge Mr. Webster's Dictionary, for the very good

reason that you had then already made considerable progress in preparing a Dictionary of your own. At the same time, you showed me a Synopsis of words of disputed pronunciation, with the respective authorities. But the result of our interview was an agreement on your part to abridge the Dictionary for me, and to allow me to use your Synopsis, with the express reservation of the right to use it as your own, for your own Dictionary. And I must say that my persuasive powers were very severely taxed in securing the desired result.

I returned to New Haven, and subsequently called on you in company with Mr. Goodrich, when the matter of variations was settled, and you entered upon the labor; and I am free to say you performed it to my entire satisfaction, and I believe to that of Professor Goodrich also, for I never heard an intimation to the contrary.

I am very faithfully yours,

S. CONVERSE.

It may not perhaps be improper for me to give brief extracts from letters which I received from Dr. Webster and Professor Goodrich, very soon after they had been informed that I "had consented to undertake the abridgment."

The following is an extract from a letter of Dr. Webster to me, dated New Haven, July 27, 1828:—

"Sir,—Mr. Converse has engaged you to abridge my Dictionary, and has requested me to forward you the copy of the first volume. This was unexpected to me; but under the circumstances, I have consented to it, and shall send the copy."

The following is an extract from a letter of Professor Goodrich to me, dated Yale College, July 28, 1828:—

"My dear Sir,—Mr. Converse, who was here on Saturday, informed us that you had consented to undertake the abridgment of Mr. Webster's Dictionary. This gives me

and Mr. Webster's other friends the highest satisfaction; for there is no man in the United States, as you know from conversation with me, who would be equally acceptable."

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The publishers of Webster's Dictionary, in order to make it appear that I have been inconsistent with myself in relation to *orthography*, say: "In 1827, an edition of Todd's Johnson's Dictionary, 1 vol. 8vo, was published in Boston, of which Mr. Worcester was the American editor. *Having the entire control of the matter*, he retained the *k* in words terminating in *c*, as *musick*, *physick*, *almanack*, &c., and the *u* in *honour*, *favour*, *authour*, and that large class of words." And they say further, in relation to orthography: "Worcester, not guided by any system or principles of his own, but seeking to fall in with the constantly changing practice of the hour," &c.

"Johnson's English Dictionary, as improved by Todd and abridged by Chalmers, with Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary combined," first published in Boston in 1827, was edited by me on principles fixed upon by the publishers and some literary gentlemen, who were their counsellors in the matter; and of these counsellors, the one who did the most in the business was the late learned and much respected Mr. John Pickering. It was made my duty to conform to the principles established for my guidance; and *I had no "control of the matter."* The Dictionary was to contain *Johnson's orthography*, and *Walker's pronunciation*. I was so far from defending the use of the final *k* in *music*, *physic*, &c., that I said in relation to it, in my Preface to that Dictionary: "The general usage, both in England and America, is at present so strongly in favor of its omission, that the retaining of it seems now to savor of affectation or singularity."

As the orthography of this Dictionary was that of Johnson, so the orthography of the Abridgment of Webster's Dictionary made by me, was that of Webster, with some

variations which were decided upon by “his representative,” and over which I had no control. The only orthography for which I am responsible is that found in my own Dictionaries.

These publishers further charge me with “adopting several of Dr. Webster’s peculiarities, omitting the *k* and *u*,” &c. I am not aware of having adopted any of Dr. Webster’s “peculiarities” relating either to orthography or pronunciation; and if any such can be found in my Dictionary, I should certainly not regard them as adding to the value of the work.

With respect to the omission of *k* in *music, public, &c.*, it may be stated, in addition to what is said above, that it was omitted in that class of words in Martin’s English Dictionary, published in 1749, before that of Johnson; and it has been omitted in many other Dictionaries published since; and the omission of *u* in *honor, favor, &c.* was countenanced in the Dictionaries of Ash and Entick, published long before that of Dr. Webster. The fact that this orthography was the prevailing usage with the best authors in this country was a good reason for adopting it.

There are other falsehoods relating to me, contained in the Advertising Pamphlet of these publishers, which I pass by without particular notice.

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With respect to the manner in which my Dictionary has generally been noticed in Reviews and Literary Journals, so far as I have seen such notices, I have reason to be entirely satisfied. There is, however, an article upon it in the American Review, published in New York, (written, as I have been informed, by a Professor at New Haven, at the time when the new edition of Dr. Webster’s Dictionary was preparing at that place,) which is in remarkable contrast to any other review of the work that I have seen. The reputed author of this article has been employed by the publishers of Dr. Webster’s Dictionary as a public

advocate of that work; and his notice of mine is so much to their purpose, that they have seen fit to insert a great part of it in their Advertising Pamphlet. Considering the circumstances under which this article was written, and the manifest object of it, such of the alleged imperfections in the Dictionary as are founded in truth, are not greater or more numerous than might reasonably be expected.

As a specimen of the candor and truthfulness of the writer of this review, I quote a part of what he says in relation to what the author of the Dictionary has done with respect to words differently pronounced by different orthoëpists:—"He has," says the reviewer, "collected and attached to every important word, every method of pronouncing it that has ever been recommended by a writer, whether great or small, conceited or well-informed, judicious or affected."

Now the following is the true statement of what is done, in the Dictionary, in relation to words differently pronounced by different orthoëpists, as may be seen on page xxiv.:—"The English authorities most frequently cited in this volume are Sheridan, Walker, Perry, Jones, Enfield, Fulton and Knight, Jameson, Knowles, Smart, and Reid, all of whom are authors of Pronouncing Dictionaries. In addition to these, various other English lexicographers and orthoëpists are frequently brought forward, as Bailey, Johnson, Kenrick, Ash, Dyche, Barclay, Entick, Scott, Nares, Mauder, Crabb, and several others; besides the distinguished American lexicographer, Dr. Webster."

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There has been, as I have understood, considerable controversy relating to the Dictionaries in the newspapers and literary journals, particularly in the city of New York; but it took place when I had little use of my eyesight, and I have seen little of it. While my Dictionary was passing through the press, one of my eyes became blind by a cata-

ract, and not a great while after, the sight of the other eye was lost in the same way; and though my eyesight has been in some measure restored, yet for a great portion of the time since its failure, I have been able to do little or nothing as a student; so that it has been impossible for me to make such a revision of my different publications, as I might otherwise have done.

The manner in which my literary productions have generally been noticed by the press and patronized by the public, calls for the expression of gratitude much more than for complaint. It is with great reluctance that I have been induced to appear before the public in a manner that may savor so much of egotism; but the base conduct of the London publisher especially seemed to render it necessary that something should be done; and I trust that nothing which has here been said in my defence will be found inconsistent with truth or propriety. I have acted wholly on the defensive, and I have no disposition "to dip my pen in gall," or to make a hostile attack on any one, or to speak disparagingly of any publication that may come in competition with mine. I have not, so far as I know, ever seen or ever injured any one of the persons on whose course I have made strictures. Whether their consciences are at ease in this matter or not, is a question that concerns themselves more than it does me. For myself, I would rather be the subject than the perpetrator of such falsehood and wrong.

J. E. WORCESTER.

## A P P E N D I X.

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As the question respecting the use made of “the materials of Dr. Webster” has become one of so much importance, I have thought, on further reflection, that it is proper the public should have the means of better understanding the reasons which induced me to take the course which I did, in preparing my “Universal and Critical Dictionary.” My course, which was known to some of my literary friends, was objected to; for I was told that, by totally abstaining from such use of Dr. Webster’s Dictionary, I deprived myself of advantages for improving my own, which I might, to some extent, without impropriety, avail myself of; but I was sure, from what had already taken place, that I could not make such use, to a degree that would be of any benefit to me, without subjecting myself to such reproach as would be very unpleasant. I therefore merely cited Dr. Webster’s authority in relation to words differently pronounced by different orthoëpists.

The necessity, in order to avoid reproach, of my taking the course I did in relation to the *Universal Dictionary*, must be sufficiently obvious to all who know what took place with respect to my previous work, entitled the *Comprehensive Dictionary*, which was first published in 1830. In November, 1834, there appeared in the “Worcester Palladium,” (a newspaper published at Worcester, Mass.,) at the instigation, as I was informed, of an agent for Dr. Webster’s Dictionaries, an attack upon me, in which the following language was used:—“*A gross plagiarism has been committed by Mr. J. E. Worcester on the literary property of Noah Webster, Esq. . . . Mr. Worcester, after having become acquainted with Mr. Webster’s plan, immediately set about appropriating to his own benefit the valuable labors, acquisitions, and productions of Mr. Webster. . . . If we had a statute which could fix its grasp on those who pilfer the products of mind, as readily as our laws embrace the common thief, Mr. Worcester would hardly escape with a light mulct.*”

At this time the “Christian Register,” published in Boston, was

edited by Professor Sidney Willard, who happened to be as well acquainted with my lexicographical labors and the circumstances relating to them, as almost any gentleman in the community ; and he answered this (as he styled it) " ferocious assault," in such a manner as he thought proper, before I had any knowledge that such an assault had been made. In order to sustain his accusation, the editor of the Palladium enumerated *twenty-one words*, which he said " are found in none of the English Dictionaries in common use, and were undoubtedly taken from Webster's." I thought proper to send to the editor an answer to his attack. In a succeeding number of the Palladium, there appeared a short letter to the editor from Dr. Webster, dated New Haven, December 11th, 1834, in which he said, " That he [Worcester] borrowed some words and definitions, I suppose to be proved by the fact that they are found in no British Dictionary ; at least in none that I have seen." Subsequently there appeared, in the Palladium, a letter from Dr. Webster, addressed to me, dated January 25th, 1835. This was followed by an answer from me, dated February 6th. Two more letters from Dr. Webster followed, together with my answers. The editor of the Christian Register transferred the whole correspondence into his paper.

By perusing all that appeared in these two newspapers, the Palladium and the Register, the reader would have the means of judging of the merits of the case, and would be able to understand something of the circumstances and reasons which induced me to take the course of abstaining entirely from the use of the materials found in Dr. Webster's Dictionary. But as it might tax the patience of the reader too much to place before him all this matter (which may be seen by examining the files of those newspapers), I will now insert Dr. Webster's first letter to me, dated January 25, together with my answer. This letter contains Dr. Webster's chief specifications against me, — a list of 121 words, " which," he said, " *primâ facie*, would seem to be taken from his Dictionary." In his subsequent letters, he did not specify any more words as borrowed from him ; and the only word specified, with respect to which he accused me of "*adding his definitions*," was the word *clapboard* ; and in that, I may say, he succeeded no better in his evidence, than with respect to the charge of borrowing the 121 words. The reader will please to compare the specifications and the evidence with the charges against me, quoted from the Worcester Palladium, and characterize the whole transaction as he may see fit.

## MR. WEBSTER'S LETTER.

*From the Worcester Palladium.*

New Haven, January 25, 1835.

MR. J. E. WORCESTER:—

SIR,—Before I saw, in the Worcester Palladium, a charge against you of committing plagiarism on my Dictionary, I had not given much attention to your Dictionary. Nor have I now read and compared with mine one tenth part of the work. But in running over it, in a cursory manner, I have collected the following words, which, *primâ facie*, would seem to have been taken from my Dictionary:—

Abatable	Hydrant	Olivaceous
Assignor	Irredeemable	Ophiologist
Augean	Instanter	Ophiology
Bateau	Isothermal	Philosophism
Cartrut	Johannes	Phosphoresce
Caucus	Judiciary ( <i>noun</i> )	Phosphorescence
Chowder	Kumiss	Phosphorescent
Congregationalist	Land-office	Prayerful
Congressional	Lapstone	Prayerless
Clapboard	Landslip	Promisee
Dell	Leach	Pappoose
Dutiable	Leachtub	Pistareen
Deliquesce	Magnetize	Pledgee
Digraph	Mazology	Postfix
Emphasize	Mishna	Postnote
Effloresce	Moccason	Raca
Educational	Monitorial	Ramadan
Effervescent	Muscovado	Razee
Electioneer	Muskrat, <i>or</i>	Redemptioner
Farrow	Musquash	Rhabdology
Fructescence	Notarial	Rock-crystal
Fracas	Neap ( <i>of a cart, &amp;c.</i> )	Roil, roily
Glazing	Neptunian	Repealable
Governmental	Outlay	Safety-valve
Grandjury	Obsidian	Semiannual
Graphite	Obstetrics	Sectional
Griddle	Ochlocracy	Sabianism

Saltrheum	Succotash	Tuffoon
Savings-bank	Selectman	Uranology
Scorify	Sparse	Varioloid
Scow	Sou	Vapor-bath
Sheepshead	Souvenir	Vermivorous
Spry	Suffix, <i>n. &amp; v.</i>	Vishna
Squirm	Tirade	Voltaism
Spinning-jenny	Tenderloin	Volcanist
Spinning-wheel	Teraphim	Waffle
Seraskier	Test, <i>v.</i>	Whiffletree
Siderography	Thammuz	Wilt
Siderographical	Tetaug	Winter-kill
Slump	Tomato	Zumology.

I will thank you, Sir, to state in what other Dictionary, except mine, you found the foregoing words, and how many or which you borrowed from mine.

Your compliance with this request will oblige

Your humble servant,

N. WEBSTER.

#### MR. WORCESTER'S ANSWER.

Cambridge, February 6, 1835.

DR. NOAH WEBSTER:—

SIR,—On Friday last I received a copy of the Worcester Palladium, in which was found a letter addressed by you to me, containing a list of one hundred and twenty-one words from my Dictionary, “which,” you say, “*primâ facie*, would seem to have been taken from your Dictionary”; and you add that you “will thank me to state in what other Dictionary, except yours, I found the words, and how many or which I borrowed from yours.”

As a lawyer, Sir, you are aware, that, when an accusation is made, the burden of the proof lies not with the accused, but with the accuser. It might not, therefore, perhaps be improper for me to take the ground that your request is an unreasonable one, and for that reason to decline to comply with it. I will not, however, avail myself of this right. I think I may truly say that in my transactions with you, it has been my intention to act uprightly and faithfully, nor do I know that an individual of those who are most acquainted with the facts (yourself excepted) has a different impres-

sion. In answer to the charges which have appeared against me in the Worcester Palladium, I have already made some statements of facts, none of which, so far as I know, have been, or can be, disproved. You now call for something further, and it shall be cheerfully granted. I feel indeed gratified by the manner in which you have been pleased to make the request; for though I have no love of contention, yet if I must be dragged into a newspaper controversy in defence of myself in this matter, I should prefer that, of all men in the world, it should be with yourself, writing under your own name.

You evidently supposed, Sir, that none of the words in your list were to be found in any Dictionary that was published before the appearance of your work; but I confess I am somewhat surprised at this fact, inasmuch as, from your reputation as a lexicographer, it might naturally be supposed that you were extensively acquainted with works of this sort, and especially with the works which are so well known to all persons who have any just pretensions to much knowledge of this kind of literature, as are the several publications which I shall name. I shall not go out of my own library, or mention any work that I was not in the habit of consulting in preparing my Dictionary.

Of the *one hundred and twenty-one* words in your list, *eighteen* are found in an edition of Bailey's Dictionary, published more than a century ago, and *twenty-one* in a later edition; *thirty-five*, in Ash's Dictionary, published in 1775; *thirty-seven*, in Todd's Johnson's Dictionary combined with Walker's, edited by *J. E. Worcester*, and published before the appearance of yours; *twenty-one*, in Mr. Pickering's Vocabulary, published in 1816; not less than *thirty* in the Encyclopædia Americana, and nearly as many in Brewster's New Edinburgh Encyclopædia;—and in these several works, upwards of *ninety* of the words are found, and many of them several times repeated. I have, in addition to the works above mentioned, about fifty English Dictionaries and Glossaries, in a majority of which I have ascertained that more or less of the words in question are to be found, but I have not leisure, at present, to go through a minute examination of them.

Of your hundred and twenty-one words, *six or seven* are not to be found, so far as I can discover, in your Quarto Dictionary, and one of them is one of those *three thousand words* which are contained in Todd's Johnson's Dictionary, but are *not* to be found in your

great work, and which were inserted by me in the octavo abridgment of your Dictionary. Whether any of the others are among the words which were inserted in the abridgment at my suggestion, I cannot say with certainty.

From the preceding statement, you may perceive, Sir, that your *prima facie* evidence is sufficiently disposed of, as it respects the most of the words in question. You inquire "in what other *Dictionary*" the words are to be found; and in your former communication to the Worcester Palladium, you were so candid as to say, "that I borrowed some words from you, you suppose to be *proved* by the fact that they are found in no British Dictionary; at least in none that you have seen." Now, Sir, it appears to me that it would be quite as sound logic to infer from the above statements, that you have not seen, or at least have not carefully examined, many British Dictionaries, as it would to infer, with respect to a list of words, that because you do not know of their existence in British Dictionaries, they must, therefore, have been taken from yours; for it appears sufficiently evident that there may be words in British Dictionaries that you are not aware of. You seem also to have overlooked the circumstance that there are, besides Dictionaries, other sources for obtaining words, which are open to me, as well as to you; and if my success in finding words *out of* Dictionaries should bear as good a comparison with yours, as it seems to bear in finding the words in question *in* them (I only put the case hypothetically), it would not appear very wonderful, if I were able to find the few remaining words without any assistance from your labors. Of the hundred and twenty-one words, you have given authorities, in your Dictionary, for only thirty-nine; but I can, without going out of my own library, furnish authorities, in all cases different from yours, for upwards of a hundred of them.

With respect to your inquiry, how many or which words I borrowed from you, I have already said that I did not know that a single one was inserted on your sole authority. I do not affirm this to have been the fact, for I am aware that oversights of this sort may happen; but if any have been so inserted, I sincerely regret the circumstance, and will engage to erase from my Dictionary every word that you will prove to have been thus inserted. But if I saw in your Dictionary a word with which I was familiar, or which I knew was in established use, or found in respectable authors, I regarded it as a word belonging, not exclusively to any individual, but to all who

write and speak the language, to be used by them on all proper occasions, even though it was not to be found in any Dictionary but yours. Take, for example, the very common compound word *semi-annual*, one in your list, which is not to be found in any of the English Dictionaries that I have examined, and you are entitled to the merit, so far as I know, of having been the first to insert this word in a Dictionary; yet you cannot doubt that I was familiar with this word before your Dictionary was published; and as I have had occasion to use it repeatedly in my other publications, I thought myself authorized to insert it also in my Dictionary. All the words in your own Dictionary were surely to be found in Dictionaries previously published, or had been previously used by other persons, except such as you coined or stamped anew, in order to enrich or embellish the language; and with regard to all words which owed their origin or new form to you, such as *ammony*, *bridegroom*, *canail*, *ieland*, *naivty*, *nightmar*, *prosopopy*, &c., it has been my intention scrupulously to avoid, as being your own property, and I have not even inserted them in my Vocabulary of Words of Various Orthography, being willing that you should for ever have the entire and exclusive possession and use of them. There is a considerable number of words in my Dictionary which are not to be found in yours; yet they have all, I believe, had the sanction of respectable usage: I can therefore claim no exclusive property in them; and you are perfectly welcome, as I have before intimated to you, to have them all inserted in your Dictionary.

Should you be disposed, Sir, to pursue the examination of my Dictionary further, and honor me with any more of your inquiries, I will attend to them as promptly as my engagements may render it convenient.

Having paid such attention to your request as my engagements have permitted, and answered your inquiry, in some measure, I trust, to your satisfaction, I would now, Sir, respectfully make a request of you, which is, *that you would be so good as to inform me whether the charges against me in the Worcester Palladium were occasioned by any statements made by you, or whether you have ever made, or are now ready to make, any such statements.*

Your compliance with this request will oblige

Your humble servant,

J. E. WORCESTER.

# A NATIONAL STANDARD.

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Gov. WOOD of Ohio, in his Annual Message, January 1852, remarks:

"It is admitted to be the most valuable work of the kind extant, by the learned men both here and in Europe; and its general use in our schools would break down all

Dr. Webster's Educational Books are believed by intelligent judges to have done more than any other cause whatever, to secure that freedom from provincialisms, and uniformity in the pronunciation and use of language, so remarkable in the United States, especially considering the great and constant influx of foreign population.

Gentlemen interested in popular education, Superintendents, Teachers, Parents, and others, are respectfully invited to consider the adaptation of Dr. Webster's Series of Dictionaries, &c., above mentioned, to secure and perpetuate this desirable uniformity.

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# WEBSTER'S DICTIONARIES.

## WEBSTER'S QUARTO DICTIONARY IN SCHOOLS.

The Legislature of New York have recently passed an Act to furnish this work to the common schools of the State, and over 8,000 copies have already been purchased, under the provisions of that Act.

*The following is an extract from the Report on the subject, by the "Committee on Literature."*

"Your Committee regard it as a superfluous labor to enlarge upon the *superiority* of this Dictionary; this is attested by the general circulation which this work has gained in this country, which is believed to be unprecedented for a work so expensive.

"That this work is peculiarly valuable for common schools, is, in the opinion of your committee, very evident. There is *no* branch of knowledge in which it is *so* important that the 750,000 children of this State who are taught in them should be perfected, *as* in the knowledge of their own language. There is no end so important to the education of the common mind as to use this our common language with correctness, ease and elegance, and to attain which we should make every possible facility readily accessible to all. And, in the opinion of your committee, there is *no* one book which furnishes so many facilities for this purpose as Webster's Unabridged *Dictionary*. The habit of referring to it will lead every scholar to a knowledge of this rich mine of *wealth intellectual*; and as he uncovers its treasures, his mind will be enlarged by the variety of knowledge which is condensed in the definitions of the familiar words he uses. The habit of reflection, too, will be matured, by being employed on objects so entirely within his reach as the words which he spells, and reads, and uses in speech. If he be once taught the habit of reflecting on words, he will soon learn to reflect on the thoughts which these words represent.

"It was proposed in the Legislature of Massachusetts at its session of last year, to provide that a copy of the *Dictionary* be furnished at the public expense, to every school district in the State who should desire to possess it. It was referred to a committee of that body, who in reporting in favor of it, use the following language. 'Webster's *Dictionary* is widely and favorably known to the public, not only in this country, but in all others where the English language is used; as a defining *Dictionary*, its superiority over all others is universally admitted. It is, indeed, a most learned and valuable work, reflecting high honor upon the literary character of our country, and cost the author the labor and research, more or less continuous, of some sixty years of his life. It has received the highest commendations from persons of the greatest consideration in this country and in England.' This Report was sustained, and a bill passed in pursuance of its recommendations; and as the result, nearly three thousand copies of this *Dictionary* have been distributed in the common schools of that State.\* The usefulness of this enactment has been attested by the resolution of thanks to the Commonwealth, which was passed at a meeting of the Association of Teachers of that State, held at Worcester last November.

"In proof of the entire success and useful operation of this measure we present also the testimony of the Rev. Dr. JACKSON, Deputy Superintendent of the common schools of Massachusetts, in a letter dated Feb. 21, 1851, and addressed to one of your Committee. 'I perceive,' he writes, 'that the Superintendent of your Common Schools has recommended that they be presented with WEBSTER'S *Dictionary* from the proceeds of your public fund. You are aware that Massachusetts has just carried out such a measure. It has been highly acceptable to the people generally. Hon. N. P. BANKS, who visited different parts of the State last summer and autumn, and who is now Speaker of the House of Representatives, informed me that no measure of our legislature was more popular or useful. In many towns the *Dictionary* was the only authoritative judge and umpire in literary matters. Where it was enthroned in a district or village school-house, not only the pupils and teacher, but the parents and citizens, appealed to it to settle questions in orthoëpy and definition, and thus it contributed to educate the entire community.'

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WEBSTER'S *Dictionary*. We learn from the *Farmer's Cabinet*, of Amherst, N. H., that HON. CHARLES G. ATHERTON, has given a considerable sum to the poor of that town, and has also presented all the schools districts with a copy of Webster's royal Quarto *Dictionary*.

If other gentlemen of abundant means in other States would emulate the laudable example of Hon. Mr. Atherton, by presenting to every school district in New England, a copy of WEBSTER'S UNABRIDGED *Dictionary*, which has become the STANDARD in Europe and America, the rising generation would have abundant cause to prefix the title of "Honorable" to the name of each such donor, and each could wear it through life with a consciousness that such title was not misapplied.—*Boston Real Estate Advertiser*, April 2, 1853.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., 1853.

**G. & C. MERRIAM, Publishers.**

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THE ENGLISH DICTIONARIES

OF

WEBSTER AND WORCESTER.

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[The following letter recently received by us, is from a prominent teacher of a High School in Middlesex County, a gentleman with whom we have not the pleasure of a personal acquaintance, and was wholly unsolicited. G. & C. M.]

“WALTHAM, MARCH 30, 1853.

*Messrs. Merriam:*

I have this morning received from Jenks, Hickling & Swan, a pamphlet of some 35 pages, in praise of Worcester's Dictionaries. Now then, I have read such notices on the pages of the Mass. Teacher and elsewhere, till I am tired, *disgusted*, with them. I know what Boston teachers and others have written, and I also know that it does not represent the opinion of teachers generally, in this part of Massachusetts. Most of us, “*out of the shade of old Harvard*,” are *Websterian*, and are *willing to say so*. Now then would a collection of teachers' names in favor of *Webster's Dictionary*, be of any use to you? If so, you shall have them.

Yours truly,  
L. P. FROST, *Principal Waltham High School.*

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SPRINGFIELD, MAY, 1853.

*Mr. Frost,*

DEAR SIR:—Your favor of the 30th March was duly received. We have also before us a copy of the pamphlet to which you refer, and beg leave to say a few things in regard to its statements. To begin with the end; its authors speak of their “regret that gratuitous and unfounded assaults upon Worcester's Dictionaries,” render it necessary for them to employ instrumentalities, for which they seem conscious an apology is necessary. We will state the facts. In 1828, Dr. Webster, after twenty or thirty years' assiduous labor, published his AMERICAN DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE in 2 vols. 4to. In the previous year, 1827, an edition of Todd's Johnson's Dictionary, 1 vol. 8vo, was published in Boston, of which Mr. Worcester was the American Editor. Having the entire control of the matter, he retained the *k* in words terminating in *c*, as *musick*, *physick*, *almanack*, &c., and the *u* in *honour*, *favour*, *authour*, and that large class of words;—Dr. Webster omitted both these, as *music*, *favor*, &c., and they constitute a very large and important class of the words in regard to which he departed from the then prevalent orthography. Shortly subsequent to this, Mr. Worcester was employed by Dr. Webster or his family, to prepare an Abridgment of the American Dictionary—the present 8vo, published by Messrs. Harpers, for which he was paid \$2,000. It may be supposed he acquired some skill in Dictionary making by this labor. Some fifteen or eighteen years subsequent to this, and very soon after Dr. Webster's death, and not till then, we believe, and after Webster's 8vo had acquired deserved celebrity and a wide sale, Mr. Worcester announced his intention to issue a Dictionary himself, of the same size and price, which he shortly did, adopting several of Dr. Webster's peculiarities, omitting the *k* and *u*, as above alluded to; but adding that he was “not aware of having taken a single word, or the definition of a word,” from Webster in the preparation of his own work. Yet it is a fact of significance in this connection, that errors in definitions, and in other respects, into which Dr. Webster was inadvertently led in his first, but corrected in subsequent editions, are faithfully found embodied in Worcester.

In the Session of the Massachusetts Legislature of 1849-50, the Committee on Education, to our surprise, and wholly unsolicited by us, wrote to us, through a member, inquiring on what terms we would supply a copy of WEBSTER'S UNABRIDGED DICTIONARY to every School District of the State. Aware of the overshadowing influence of Boston authors, Boston publishers, &c., for Boston books, we had not sought, and did not desire, to engage in an enterprise likely to awaken active opposition from the "interested sources," to which Messrs. Jenks, Hickling & Swan refer. But before we were well aware that the Committee seriously had the subject before them, the publishers of Worcester had a learned gentleman employed as counsel before the Committee, exhausting epithets, apparently, in vilifying Webster's Dictionary. This, so far as we know, was the first "gratuitous and unprovoked assault" of "interested parties." On the spur of the moment, apprised by telegraph, while yet the opposing counsel was engaged in his argument, Prof. Porter of New Haven, appeared before the Committee in our behalf, and his argument on the occasion you will find appended to this letter. We think the true merits of Webster were more fully understood in Boston, after this effort, than before. The attempt was made in the Legislature to substitute Worcester for Webster, but failed. Then by the friends of Worcester to give both, but this also failed. Then it was left with each District to take either at its option, with no cost to itself whichever it selected, but guided only by what it regarded, on the whole, as the **BEST DICTIONARY**. What plainer test? Suppose the State paid more for one than the other? The District did not take the book to *sell*, but to *use*. And what if the larger work contained more paper and words? If it was full of errors, unreliable, fitted to mislead, &c., the more there was of it the worse the gift. But it is said many of them took it as a "book of reference," but preferred the other work as their standard. But what is any Dictionary but a "book of reference?" It is "referred" to for authority in Definitions, Orthography, Pronunciation, and all matters treated of. Well, thus acting for themselves, strong influences brought to bear, through the Common School Journal, &c., to induce them to take Worcester, in the first four or five months after the law took effect, **THREE THOUSAND AND THIRTY-FIVE** of the Districts ordered **WEBSTER**, and but one hundred and five took Worcester—a proportion of **THIRTY TO ONE**, selecting Webster as their **STANDARD WORK**.

Gov. Wood of Ohio, in his Annual Message to the Legislature of the State, in January, 1852, in considering the educational interests of that State, adverted to what Massachusetts and New York had done, in placing WEBSTER'S UNABRIDGED DICTIONARY in their schools as their **STANDARD WORK**, and spoke of its being thus regarded almost universally, where the English language is spoken. The Publishers of Worcester controvert this, affirming that "Worcester's School Dictionaries are used in most of the principal cities and towns throughout the State," and quote from a Report made by one of the City School Committees, disparaging Webster. In examining the testimony of the case, let us look at the position of the witnesses. The writer of the School Report is understood to be a gentleman who is author of a work published by the house who also publish Worcester's Dictionary.

The Report stated that a copy of Webster furnished by the State, was found in the attic, or other repository for lumber, unused. Compare this with the statement of Mr. PHILBRICK, one of the most excellent of the then Boston teachers, as given in his letter, (see next page,) that Webster's Unabridged Dictionary "was used more than all the other books of reference in the Library," with the statement of Mr. PARKER, of the Johnson School, that "Webster's Unabridged Dictionary is seldom out of my sight, and is the only one to which I refer, for the meaning and etymology of a word," and of Mr. SHEPARD, of the Lyman School, that, "In my labors as a teacher in the Boston Schools for ten years, I have not been without the work [Webster's Dictionary] for reference at all times, by both Assistants and pupils."

It should be noticed, also, that the very general recommendation of Worcester's Dictionary signed by several prominent gentlemen, was so signed *before the present edition of Webster was issued*, and that some of the same gentlemen at least, have since expressed in stronger terms, their approval of Webster.

We are authorized by a gentleman then a member of the Boston School Committee, to say, that had Worcester's Dictionary not been in the Boston schools at the time of the Legislative provision, and the choice been between Webster and Worcester, **WEBSTER WOULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN FOR THE BOSTON SCHOOLS**.

Mr. ELBRIDGE SMITH, Principal of the Cambridge High School, who signed the Cambridge certificate that Worcester is used in their schools, (the place of Mr. Worcester's residence,) expressed his concurrence in the following—

"I find it invaluable FOR THE FULLNESS AND ACCURACY OF ITS DEFINITIONS, and for the very extensive vocabulary of Greek and Latin proper names. Pupils should be accustomed from the very first to acquire well defined and distinct ideas of the meaning of words. This gives an exactness to their knowledge which will be of invaluable service to them through life. But a large portion of our teachers are not able to impart this critical and exact information without access to JUST SUCH A WORK AS DR. WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY, and but few have the means to provide it for themselves."

Indeed, all those gentlemen, intelligent and highly respectable as we know them to be, of the Boston and Cambridge Schools, we doubt not would fully indorse Mr. Smith's opinion. They only say Worcester's School Dictionaries were taken by the School Committees of those places. They were so taken we believe, before the new editions of Webster appeared, the Publishers of Worcester being residents of the city, if not connected with the city government, of Boston. Have you ever met the individual, an intelligent man, not an "interested party," who would not say, that if there were but two English Dictionaries, Webster's and Worcester's, he would unhesitatingly take WEBSTER?

In regard to the statement that "Worcester's School Dictionaries are used in most of the principal cities and towns throughout the State," we replied that "Published in Boston, having been actively pushed by agents, &c., in the State, some higher schools *having been furnished with them gratuitously*, we are assured, and, adopting many of Webster's improvements, we believe they are considerably used in some sections of the State. Webster's School Dictionaries are not published in New England, and we are not aware of any agent having labored for their introduction in Massachusetts, for many years. Yet in regard to Western Massachusetts, the section of the State with which we are particularly familiar, having recently addressed an inquiry to the leading booksellers as to the proportion sold by them of each, we received the following replies: 'Amherst, June 17, 1852. The sale of Webster's School Dictionary is as a hundred to one of Worcester's, with us. It is very rare that we sell a copy of Worcester.—J. S. & C. Adams.' 'Northampton, June 16, 1852. We sell about twenty Webster to one Worcester. Indeed, the proportion of Webster is much larger, undoubtedly. In fact, we seldom sell a copy of Worcester.—Hopkins, Bridgman & Co.' 'Pittsfield, June 17. We do not sell Worcester's Dictionary at all.—E. Werden.' 'North Adams, June 17. Ten to one of Webster.' 'Springfield, June 17. More than seven-eighths are Webster's—in the county, one hundred to one,—Merriam, Chapin & Co.' 'Great Barrington, June 17, 1852. The proportion is one hundred of Webster to none of Worcester.—Dewey & Eddy.' 'Greenfield, June 19. Webster more than five to one. L. Merriam' and others of similar import. This does not confirm the Worcester statement. We know that Webster's are used in many towns in Central and Eastern Massachusetts also."

Your own statement with regard to the intelligent teachers of Middlesex County in the heart of the State, that "most of us, out of the shade of old Harvard are WEBSTERIAN"—added to the foregoing, we think suitably responds to the above wholesale statement.

The certificate, likewise of the highly respectable Principals of the Public Schools of Boston and Cambridge that the *committees* of those places have adopted Worcester's School Dictionaries, (and that before Webster's revised editions were issued, is by no means an expression of the opinion, by those teachers, that they regard Worcester as superior to Webster. Let us take a fairer test. We subjoin letters of recent date from *three* of the Boston teachers, whose names are thus appended; Mr. PHILBRICK now of the Connecticut State Normal School: Mr. PARKER, author of a treatise on Natural Philosophy, and many other valuable Text Books; and Mr. SHEPARD, of the Lyman School. Mr. JOHN D. PHILBRICK, until recently Principal of one of the Boston Public Schools, (the Quincy,) long known and highly esteemed as a teacher when in Boston, selected by the MASSACHUSETTS STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION as one of the editors of their Journal, the MASSACHUSETTS TEACHER, and recently transferred to the State Normal School of Connecticut, writes us as follows—

"State Normal School, New Britain, Ct., April 18, 1853.

MESSRS. G. & C. MERRIAM:

GENTLEMEN:—I have the pleasure to assure you that the teachers and pupils of the Model Department of this Institution, are truly grateful to you for the fine copy of WEBSTER'S UNABRIDGED QUARTO DICTIONARY, which you sent for their use. The pupils have free access to it, and it is in constant requisition. Its beneficial influence on the scholarship of the school is already visible. The scholars are beginning to appreciate the difference between *guessing* at the import of the terms used in their text-books, and *knowing* their meaning with precision and exactness.

A copy of the work, furnished by the State, had been in use in my school-room in Boston, during the two years preceding my removal to this place, *and it was used more than all the other books of reference in the Library*, which contained a good selection of that class of books. My observation of its utility in a public school has fully convinced me that it is just the thing needed in every District School in the land.

This great work is the product of the State of Connecticut, and she ought to have taken the lead in furnishing it to all her schools, for the use of all her children. I know of no means whereby the common schools of the State could be benefited more at the same expense than by placing a copy in every school-house. I hope the day is not distant when the State will confer this blessing on her children.

Very respectfully yours,  
JOHN D. PHILBRICK."

ISAAC F. SHEPARD, Esq. Principal of the Lyman School, writes:—

"Boston, April 27, 1853.

MESSRS. G. & C. MERRIAM:

GENTLEMEN:—I take pleasure in adding my testimony to the great value of WEBSTER'S UNABRIDGED AMERICAN DICTIONARY. In my labors as a teacher in the Boston Schools for ten years, *I have not been without the work, for reference at all times, by both Assistants and pupil.* I consider it an invaluable companion; and in the Etymology and Definitions of the language, strict, faithful, copious and understandable; in short, just what is needed by every man, woman and child in the Union, who would *know* the language we use. Massachusetts is deserving of the deepest gratitude of her children for the gift of the book to all her public schools; and I trust that not only Connecticut, who is especially bound to the duty, but every State in the Confederacy, will speedily follow her example.

Yours very truly,

ISAAC F. SHEPARD, Principal Lyman School for Girls."

And Mr. PARKER, of the Johnson School:—

"Boston, April 26, 1853.

"I beg leave to assure you, that Webster's *Unabridged Dictionary* is seldom out of my sight, and is the only one to which I ever refer for the meaning and etymology of a word. Notwithstanding I have some objections to the orthography\* of Mr. Webster, I prefer his *Unabridged Dictionary* to any and all others, and could I have but one, *his* would be the one I should select. The clearness of his definitions, the elaborateness with which he has traced the etymology of his words, and the transparency, so to speak, which he has thereby given to their proper signification, are features in his work, which have made it the Dictionary of the English Language, and him a benefactor to all of Anglo-Saxon origin. It is destined in my opinion to supplant all its predecessors, and to become the great fountain to which all will resort for draughts of pure English.

Respectfully Yours,  
RICH. G. PARKER."

We do not doubt that the other gentlemen, connected with the Boston and Cambridge Schools, and who with Messrs. PHILBRICK, SHEPARD and PARKER, signed the certificate that committees had placed Worcester's School Dictionaries in their schools, entertain similar opinions as to the pre-eminent merit of Webster.

In the State of New York, the same measure, of supplying each of its 11,000 District Schools, was taken up by the Legislature. Hon. CHRISTOPHER MORGAN, Secretary of State, and Superintendent of Common Schools, in his Annual Report to the Legislature, said,

"In connection with the subject of District Libraries, the Superintendent deems it his duty particularly to direct the attention of the trustees and inhabitants of the several school districts to a work of undoubted utility and pre-eminently of a national character, which should find a place in every library, viz., Webster's *Unabridged Quarto Dictionary*, published by Messrs. G. & C. Merriam, Massachusetts. As a *STANDARD OF ORTHOGRAPHY AND ORTHOEPY*, its claims to general adoption have been recognized by the most eminent scholars and statesmen of our land; and as a purely American work, prepared at great expense, and emanating from a source entitled to the highest credit and respect, it commends itself strongly to the adoption of our School Districts generally."

\* In a subsequent note, Mr. Parker says "That Webster's Orthography will be the standard, I have no doubt."

The Trustees of the State Normal School adopted it as

**THE STANDARD IN THE STATE NORMAL SCHOOL.**

"Resolved, unanimously, That Webster's Quarto Dictionary be the STANDARD in the New York State Normal School.

"WM. H. CAMPBELL, Clerk Ex. Com.

"ALBANY, March 12, 1850."

It was likewise adopted by the Regents for the Academies of the State;—

**RECOMMENDED BY THE REGENTS.**

At a meeting of the Regents, held at the Capitol, Albany, February 14, 1850,—

"Resolved, unanimously, That the new edition of Webster's Dictionary in Quarto, edited by Prof. Chauncey A. Goodrich, and published by G. & C. Merriam, Springfield, Mass., be recommended to be purchased for the libraries of academies under the visitation of the Regents. [About 150 in number.]

"A true copy,

T. ROMEYN BECK."

HON. JOHN C. SPENCER, formerly Secretary of State, and State Superintendent of Common Schools, says—

"It is unquestionably the very best Dictionary of our language extant. It is a model of copiousness and precision; and its great accuracy in the definition and derivation of words gives it an authority that no other work on the subject possesses. It is constantly cited and relied on in our Courts of Justice, in our Legislative bodies, and in public discussions, as entirely conclusive."

The measure met with great favor in the Legislature, and few Bills passed that body with such a degree of unanimity. "Worcester was not once proposed or thought of," except we believe that its Publishers presented a petition that it might be taken, and had leave to withdraw. It was not surprising, however, that they, or other "interested parties," should have sought to defeat Webster, nor that a member was found willing, the materials gathered by the appropriate scavengers, to embody whatever authors or publishers interested against Dr. Webster's works as interfering with their own, could collect, into a "Minority Report" of 1,—that being the whole number, of the Educational Committee in either body, who could be induced so to assail the measure, and of four or five votes against the measure, in the entire Senate, only one, we believe, the author of the Report, opposed it on literary grounds.

About NINE THOUSAND of the Districts of that State, under the provisions of that law, have voted, each for itself, to appropriate a portion of their library money for the purchase of WEBSTER UNABRIDGED, and that number of copies are now lying upon as many teachers' tables in that State, for the mutual benefit of teacher and scholar.

Is Gov. Wood in error in saying that *New York has taken WEBSTER AS HER STANDARD WORK?*

To revert to the Minority Report. The author indorses the following objection to Webster:—"He strikes the *u* from *honour, favour, &c.*, because it is superfluous, but he does not strike the *u* from *serious, courage, &c.*, where it is as superfluous," and Messrs. Jenks, Hickling & Swan publish this as a legitimate argument against Webster.

Yet Worcester's *Dictionary*, which they publish, do the very same thing!

Mr. Irving, having been heard to express his dissent from some of Dr. Webster's views upon Orthography, was induced to reply to a letter from the author of the Minority Report. The publishers of Worcester circulate this, withholding what they are aware is our explanation, which is given as follows:—

[From the *Boston Evening Transcript*, August 8, 1851.]

In the Minority Report, presented to the New York Senate, relative to placing a copy of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary in each of the District Schools of that State, occurs a letter from Washington Irving to the person making the report. Mr. Irving complains that we published, from a letter addressed to us by himself, a portion favorable to the Dictionary, without adding his expression of dissent from its orthography.

In February, 1849, in reply to a complimentary copy of the Dictionary sent him, by us, Mr. I. wrote us, "I consider this Dictionary in many respects the **BEST IN OUR LANGUAGE**, and find it an invaluable *vade-mecum*." He added, "I must frankly tell you, however, that I do not make it my standard for orthography, in the publication of my works. My reason simply is, that it differs occasionally from the orthography in use among the best London publishers. Now, however much we of the United States may refine and improve the language of our own country, yet the world will look to London as the standard of pure English, as they will to Paris for pure French, and to Madrid for pure Castilian. Any deviation on our part from the best London usage, will be liable to be considered as a provincialism," &c. He adds, "I do not pretend to take any part in the controversy which is going on in the periodical press on the subject, [the Macaulay controversy,] and indeed I am apt to be somewhat negligent in matters of the kind," &c.

To the complaint of Mr. Irving, we reply,

1. We published a single line of his letter—"I find it an invaluable *vade-mecum*,"—as an independent sentence of itself, not dependent on any thing which preceded or followed, for its full and true import, and withholding, necessarily, much, and that perhaps the strongest, of what he had said in commendation, as we were giving the briefest possible extracts from a number of writers.

2. We did not thereby commit Mr. Irving to unqualified approval of everything the work might contain, his language quoted not implying this, and we having publicly and on all occasions stated that there were differences of opinion as to some points of Webster's orthography. But,

3. We found on examination that Mr. Irving, "in the publication of his works" in Putnam's authorized edition, issued under the author's own supervision, *does* make Webster his standard of orthography, in opposition to "that in use among the best London publishers," so far that we think we are entirely safe in saying, that we will point out *nine* cases in any given chapter of the "Alham bra," for instance, in which the orthography conforms to Webster, as opposed to London usage, to *one*, that shall be cited where the latter differs from the former. Mr. I., for instance, follows Webster in giving the termination *or* in flavor, favor, interior, demeanor, &c., (see *Alhambra*, pp. 14-20)—a constantly recurring class of words.

The English usage, although not entirely uniform, yet almost invariably gives flavour, &c., inserting the *u*. So Mr. I. doubles the *l* in recall, p. 13, &c.—the London publishers do not. Had we, therefore, given Mr. Irving's *theory*, and then stated his *practice*, of orthography, we should have made him a party "to the controversy going on," to our advantage, perhaps, but in opposition to his intimated wishes.

We may add, that notwithstanding the opposition, from notoriously interested sources, the majority of the committee of the New York Senate (but a single dissentient) warmly recommended the Dictionary measure. The Bill met the approval of seven-eighths of the entire Legislature, and 8,000 to 10,000 of the school districts have been supplied with it as their **STANDARD WORK**.

We may add, also, that Irving expressly repudiates *Worcester's* Dictionary, since that departs widely from London usage—Mr. Irving's authority. Have we any National Literature? Or are the Pronunciation and Orthography of the London cockney and pedant, our infallible guide?

The truth is, that interested parties, in assailing the orthography of Webster's Dictionary, studiously conceal the fact that Prof. Goodrich, in the present revised edition, where general usage,—the ultimate arbiter in all such matters—seemed not likely finally to adopt Dr. Webster's peculiarities, restored the old orthography, and where the *two* modes are in accordance with good usage gives both:—thus he has *center* and *centre*, *defense* and *defence*, and so the use of both is with the authority of Webster's Dictionary. The London Lexicons give a similar latitude in matters of pronunciation and orthography. In the language of the New York International—

"Dr. Webster attempted, and with eminent success, to reduce the English Language to order, and to subject it to the operation of principles." The soundness of his views is evidenced by the steady advance of his system in public favor, and the very general adoption already of its essential features.

*Springfield, Mass., August, 1852.*

G. & C. MERRIAM.

We may add, that at that very time, during the Macaulay controversy, it came out in the strongest proof, that the "best London Publishers" *have* no standard of their own, but employ sometimes one orthography and sometimes another. Their *general* usage, in some respects differs from Webster and Worcester both, as in the use of *u* in *honour*, and can we take English usage as a standard, when the English themselves have no uniformity? Besides, it is a well known fact, that the language is spoken with far greater purity in this country than in Great Britain as a whole. There the inhabitants of even adjacent countries—those of the poorer classes, at least, can hardly understand each other—much less be understood by a stranger. Not one in four of the adult population of the island, it has been stated, can read, and the purity as well as progress, of the language, seem quite as safe in our keeping as in theirs.

Mr. Irving's *practice* was essentially Websterian, and we submit, it was honorable, just, fair-minded, and entirely consistent with what we might suppose in accordance with his wishes, to state precisely what he had said—that he regarded Webster "as an invaluable *vade-mecum*," only, when we could not state his *theory* of orthography, without, in justice to ourselves, stating his *practice*, and perhaps involving him in a public controversy, which he expressly deprecated.

But do the Publishers of Worcester adopt Mr. Irving's views, that it is not admissible to depart from London usage, in Orthography? But Worcester's Dictionaries recognize no such standard, and depart widely from London usage; and Mr. Worcester himself, in his preface to Todd's Johnson, in regard to Pronunciation very sensibly says, "Although the usage of the best society of London is entitled to more weight than that of any other city with regard to the many millions who speak the English language; yet it is not the only circumstance to be considered. The usage of the best society of the particular country or district in which one resides, is not to be disregarded. We should have little respect for the taste of him who, if all with whom he was conversant, in the pronunciation of certain words, conformed to the analogy of the language, should deviate from it because he had learned that such was the practice in London."

But let us try these gentlemen by their own rule:—

The *National Intelligencer* of April 19, 1852, says of Webster: "It is the Dictionary of all Dictionaries of the English language, *full* and *precise*, and is the book of all others essential to all professional men, all men of science, all printers, and, indeed, every man who understands the force of words, and the importance of an accurate and perfect knowledge of the vehicle of his own ideas and of the thoughts of others." (Without favoring the public with the above warm commendation, the pub-

lishers of Worcester's Dictionaries give an isolated extract from the above mentioned article not approving of *one mode* [where good usage sanctions two, Webster now gives both] of orthography employed by a New York publishing house, which mode, it is believed, is yet adopted by the great majority of our countrymen, and is daily gaining favor.—“*Suppressio veri*,” &c.)

This is about equal to preparing, or furnishing materials for, an assault upon Webster, in a Boston paper, and then quoting it gravely as the expression of the press!

“Hon. DANIEL WEBSTER does not ‘follow Worcester.’—Some of his recently published works follow Dr. Webster, and others vary from him, as his different publishers incline. He has expressly declared his opinion, over his own signature, that Webster's is ‘THE MOST COMPLETE, ACCURATE, AND RELIABLE DICTIONARY OF THE LANGUAGE.’”

“The works of Sparks, Bancroft, Bryant, &c., were mostly published before Worcester's large Dictionary was issued, and of course did not ‘follow’ it. Bryant says of Webster: ‘It is a mine of philological research and erudition—a *thesaurus* of the English Language.’”

But we do not deem it necessary to follow the thirty-five page pamphlet farther. If its publishers think it exactly in accordance with good taste, to circulate such statements as that “Webster was a weak, vain, plodding Yankee, ambitious to be an American Johnson, without one substantial qualification for the undertaking,” when such men as Lord Brougham say of the AMERICAN DICTIONARY that “IT IS A NECESSITY TO EVERY EDUCATED MAN;” and Dr. Dick of Scotland, that “it is undoubtedly, the most complete *Dictionary of the English language that has ever been published*, and *ages will elapse* before any other dictionary of that language will be required. It is, in every respect, far superior to the folio editions of Johnson's Dictionary;” and Chancellor Kent, that “*The American Dictionary of the English Language* is a work of profound investigation, and does infinite honor to the philological learning and general literature of this country;” and numerous other equally ripe and distinguished scholars in both hemispheres, speak of it in terms not less commendatory;—when *one million* children in the United States open a new copy of Webster's Spelling Book every year, (that being its annual sale,) and the earliest literary associations of almost the entire generation now on the stage, native born, in this country, revert to this same little manual, and feelings of gratitude and regard for its venerated author spontaneously spring up with them; while in their maturer years, and with regard to his great work, they are proud to know that his fame extends over the globe, and is the common inheritance of their country,—we can only say, *chacum a son gout*,—no accounting for tastes.

We feel quite sure, however, such a course is not in accordance with the views and feelings of Mr. Worcester himself, courteous, dignified, and refined as we believe him to be; nor yet quite consonant with the course heretofore pursued by the publishing house in question.

What the public have to do with the matter, however, and what yourself and other intelligent teachers and friends of education desire, is to know which is the best English Dictionary to which to refer, and which to employ in the school-room. Permit us to state briefly, but we trust truly, the points of difference between Webster and Worcester. The three leading features of a good English Dictionary, it will be conceded, are, its *Definitions*, its *Orthography*, and its *Pronunciation*; and their importance is perhaps in the order named. Let us contrast the works in those features. What we say of Worcester, will be mainly from a discriminating Review of that work which appeared in one of our leading monthly periodicals soon after its publication.

#### I. WEBSTER IN ITS DEFINITIONS.

“So far as I know, there is an unanimity of opinion that Dr. Webster's is the BEST DEFINING Dictionary in the English language.”—Hon. Horace Mann, late Secretary Board of Education for Massachusetts.

“Every scholar knows the value of a work, which has done so much to enlarge our acquaintance with the English vocabulary, both by the number of its words, and the ACCURACY AND EXTENT OF ITS DEFINITIONS.”

WM. H. PRESCOTT, the Historian.

“It far excels all other Dictionaries, so far as I know, in giving and DEFINING scientific terms.”—Pres. Hitchcock, of Amherst College.

Hon. JOHN C. SPENCER, one of the most eminent jurists of the State of New York, under date of June 18, 1851, says of Webster's *Unabridged Dictionary*—

“IT IS UNQUESTIONABLY THE VERY BEST DICTIONARY OF OUR LANGUAGE EXTANT. It is a model of copiousness and precision; and its GREAT ACCURACY IN THE DEFINITION AND DERIVATION OF WORDS gives it an authority that no other work on the subject possesses. IT IS CONSTANTLY CITED AND RELIED ON IN OUR COURTS OF JUSTICE, in our legislative bodies, and in public discussions, as entirely conclusive.”

“It is scarcely necessary to add that such a work is a treasure which can not be dispensed with by

any one who would thoroughly understand and correctly use his mother tongue. It should be in every school in our land, that our youth may not be obliged, as I have been, to unlearn the false pronunciation, the unsound philology, and the erroneous definitions, which were taught me in my childhood."

WILLIAM RUSSELL, Esq., a distinguished teacher of Elocution, says—

"The extreme EXACTNESS, as well as the NUMBER, EXTENT, and FULLNESS of the DEFINITIONS which it furnishes to every important word, render it a mine of philological wealth to instructors."

Hon. WM. B. CALHOUN says, [1847]—

"What distinguishes this Dictionary above all others is the THOROUGHNESS AND ACCURACY OF ITS DEFINITIONS; and this is the leading feature of such a work. This is a department of learning which is singularly difficult; and very few excel in it. It requires uncommon clearness and comprehensiveness of intellect. Definitions often lose their point by being overburdened with words. Dr. Webster was wonderfully happy in the use of language. And HIS DEFINITIONS ARE MODELS OF CONDENSATION AND PURITY; and the careful study of them, as an intellectual exercise, may safely be recommended to the young, especially, as an important means of advancement in knowledge. There is great fullness, too, in this work, in the defining of words; and in this respect it might be called an Encyclopedia, presenting substantially the circle of the sciences."

"Webster's DEFINITIONS are unrivaled; the merit of the work in this respect is enough to settle its claims. He was the best etymologist that ever attempted to define our language."—*National Magazine*.

We might quote expressions like the above, and from the highest authority, almost without number.

Webster's superiority, in its DEFINITIONS, to all other English Dictionaries, we believe has never been controverted, even by the warmest friends of Worcester.

Please refer to Prof. Porter's Argument, page 1, 2, on this head. Take now,

#### WORCESTER IN ITS DEFINITIONS.

Under this head, Mr. Worcester is very unequal. The definitions are usually correct, and under most words he gives most of the senses of which the word is capable, and in which it is used. But the words are defined more usually by a synonym than by descriptions, and synonyms and descriptions are strangely huddled together, with less regard to order than is desirable, and with little attention to the development of the meaning. All words have a primary and original sense, which is capable of being expressed by a definition that is logical. From this original meaning, the desired signification may be traced; and often, in the order of the origin and growth of each, to the perfection of a definition, it is necessary that the meaning be clearly conceived, then that it be precisely expressed, and in such a way that the description will be true of this word, and of no other words; and not that *while* it is true of this word, it is also true of many others; and last of all, that its variety of meanings be arranged according to the chronological and philosophical order of their development. It is owing to the fact, that Dr. Webster proposed to himself the ideal of a definition, that his dictionary so far surpasses every other; and it is this that has enabled it to fight its own way against some well-founded and more prejudiced opposition. We were impressed with the deficiencies of Mr. Worcester, when tested by this ideal, on a first and hasty glance at the work. We have had it confirmed by the testimony of an intelligent foreigner, very familiar with languages, and who has been in the habit of consulting dictionaries to gain clear and discriminating knowledge of words; and we were more deeply impressed with the deficiency when we compared a few words selected at hazard from Worcester and Webster, and saw the contrast between the definitions. Accuracy of definition is essential to accuracy of thought. It exerts an important influence, also, on truth and honesty of character. Honest men are proverbially clear in their definitions. Demagogues and sophists rejoice in confusion of terms, and in vagueness of thoughts, words, definitions, propositions and reasonings. It ought to be stated that Mr. Worcester expressly affirms that, "with respect to Webster's Dictionary, which the compiler several years since abridged, he is not aware of having taken a single word, or the definition of a word, from that work, in the preparation of this." We think his work would have been improved had he allowed himself a little greater liberty.

We specify the following words as erroneously defined:

*Coupon* is defined "a dividend in a public fund or joint stock." The Dictionary of the Academy gives no such sense, but defines the word as it is used in England and this country, for small printed certificates of interest upon stocks, bonds, &c., which are *cut off* from time to time, to be presented for payment.

*Hospice*—"A sort of hospital for monks." It is a religious establishment in the passes of the Alps, for the entertainment of travelers without expense.

*Perchloride*—"A compound of chlorine with phosphorus." A perchloride of gold would therefore be a compound of chlorine, phosphorus and gold. We need not say that a perchloride is a compound of chlorine with any substance, in which chlorine is combined in its highest possible proportion.

*Post note*—After giving the true sense of the word, Mr. W. adds another—"a cash note to be sent by post"—giving Bouvier as authority. We doubt whether the word is ever used, in this sense, or whether Bouvier has justified it. The definition in his Law Dictionary contains nothing of the kind.

We give also several instances of mere transcription, with manifest neglect to verify the thing transferred—sometimes doing injustice to the authority from whom the definition purports to have been derived, and in some instances contradicting himself under different heads.

*Heptandrian*—"Seven-fold masculine, or having seven stamens; heptandrous;" giving Lindley for his authority. The termination in *ian*, in botany, was proposed by Dr. Webster, but never adopted by botanists. We find no such word in Lindley as *heptandrian*, and certainly he never gave it the

definition, "seven-fold masculine." In like manner he gives *Hexagynian*—"six-fold feminine, or having six pistils;" ascribed also to Lindley.

*Hexandrian* is ascribed to Pen. Cyclopedias. *Hexandrous*, and not *Hexandrian*, is given under the article Botany.

*Dodecadrian*, *Dodecagynian*, are given as "twelve-fold masculine" and "twelve-fold feminine," on the authority of Smart, and he is probably entitled to the honor of this very original definition.

*Seasonless*, he derives from Byron—"having no seasons; unseasonably." The last definition is wholly aside from Byron's meaning, and defines an adjective by an adverb.

*Euphuism*, *Euphuist*—Euphuism is defined by Euphemism!! and Euphemism by Euphuism; and the Edinburgh Review and Scott are given as authorities. The editor certainly mistook the meaning of one of these words, if he had a clear view of either. Did he verify his mistake by a reference to his authorities?

*Garglion* is given, on the authority of Quincy, as "an exudation from a bruise which indurates into a hard tumor." Quincy has no such word, nor is there any such in the language, and it is obvious, that somebody, from whom Mr. Worcester took the word, wrote *garglion* for *ganglion*.

*Fortalice* is defined a fortress, a citadel; and yet *fortilage* is defined "a little fort, a block-house," with the remark, "same as fortalice." If he had looked into Old Mortality, he would have found the fortalice of Scott was not the citadel, but an outwork.

*Edge* (adj.) and *Edge-rail*—The first is defined, "applied to a railroad in which the carriages run upon rails or edges of rails, *as in common railroads*." The second: "An iron bar or rail, upon which the wheels of a railroad can revolve, a flange being formed upon the inner edge of the rail, projecting about an inch, in order to prevent the wheels from sliding off. The two roads, here described, are very different.

*Gnomometrical* seems to have been copied blindly from Smart, for *goniometrical*, as the definition plainly shows the word to be.

*Fluvialist* is defined, "one who treats of rivers." This word, in Geology, properly denotes one who accounts for the origin of certain strata, in a peculiar way.

*Ephah* is defined to be 15 cubic inches, which would be less than half a pint, and yet a *Hin*, which is the tenth of an Ephah, is defined as five quarts. The fact is that the Ephah contains, according to the lowest computation, nearly a bushel, and according to Gesenius, almost a bushel and a half, or 2,600 Paris inches.

*Homer* is defined, "a Hebrew measure, of about 3 pints." It was the largest Hebrew measure, containing 10 baths, as stated in the Scriptures, or more than 70 gallons.

*Kraal* is "a rude hut or cabin of Hottentots, with conical or round tops." It is a village of such huts, never a single one.

*Saddle-Cloth* is defined, 'A cover for a saddle:' if it ever means this, which we question, this is not the more common signification.

*Reformed* is vaguely and imperfectly defined. The Reformed Churches of the continent were a large body of churches, embracing the Swiss, the Dutch, the French, and other communions which separated from Luther on the subject of the sacramental presence.

The words *Ecclesiastic* and *Telic* are defined in a most vague and imperfect way. As applied to transitional particles, especially in sacred interpretation, they have a forcible and peculiar use which is only hinted at, and seems not to have been distinctly conceived.

*Sophister* is defined, "An undergraduate." But a freshman in the English university is also an undergraduate, but not a sophister.

*Sophist* is defined, as one of its meanings, "An undergraduate at the University of Cambridge, England; a sophister." Is sophist ever used in this sense? *Soph.* is the usual abbreviation.

*Shingle* is defined, a thin board to cover houses; a sort of tiling. This was designed for English readers, probably.

*Neology*—"A term applied to a new system of Interpretation of the Scriptures in Germany." How much information does this convey! Why not tell what system of interpretation?

*Livery-Men*, in London, is defined, "A number of men belonging to the freemen of the ninety-one companies," &c. Why so vague? Instances like these might be given to an unlimited extent.—*American Review*.

## 2. WEBSTER IN ITS ORTHOGRAPHY.

Much misapprehension, and more misrepresentation, have been current with regard to Dr. Webster's system of Orthography:

"The English language has been singularly confused in its orthography. Dr. Johnson says that it is 'highly irregular and fortuitous.' Take any work printed two hundred years ago, as 'The Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth,' and we shall see numerous words, the spelling of which is far different from that now adopted. It is even unorthodox and offensive to the eye. The same is true of the spelling of some words a half-century since. One reason is to be found in the genius of the English people. On the continent, academies of the learned take the matter in hand, fix the mode of spelling each word, and their dictation is obeyed by the educated, who are followed by the people. But in England and America, every man spells as he pleases. Authors take a fancy or caprice to spell, each a few words, after a peculiar fashion. Their example finds imitators, and the new spelling is adopted. Lexicographers, too, think they know more about such a matter than other men, and they propose such changes as seem to them advisable. By these two agencies, that of authors and lexicographers, great changes have been effected in the past and are still going on.

"Dr. Johnson proposed numerous changes, involving as great innovations as those charged on Dr. Webster. But the lexicographer can only propose, he can not enforce. Dr. Johnson found this true. Many of the changes proposed by him were not adopted by the public, and were abandoned in the later editions of his Dictionary. Since his time, other changes have crept in, one by one. The leaven has been working, silently but surely."—*Prof. Porter's Argument*, p. 4.

Dr. Webster's main principle on this subject was, "that the tendencies of our language to greater simplicity and broader analogies, ought to be watched and cherished with the utmost care."—(Preface to 4to. Dictionary, p. viii.) This tendency and progress have been recognized and acted upon for a long period. What would be thought of a man who should now attempt to make his orthography conform to that of Chaucer, for example? Dr. Webster omits the *k* from *maniack*, *logick*, &c., and the *u* from *honour*, *favour*, &c., and the British public are gradually conforming to the same method. The termination *re*, of French origin, which, in many words, conforming to the English pronunciation, has been changed to *er*, as *chamber*, *cider*, &c., Dr. W. carries through, as *center*, *meter*, &c. There are two valid reasons for this; first, to carry out the change already begun, and secure regularity and some method, so as to facilitate the acquisition of the language by a foreigner and its ready mastery by our own children. And secondly, to indicate the pronunciation. As we say *ci-der*, not *sidr*, like the French, and *cham-ber*, not *shambr*, so we say *cen-ter*, not *sentr*. What propriety in spelling, as does Worcester, *metre*, *tre*, but *diam-eter*, a derivative, *ter*? Or, why, as he also does, *expense* and *expensive*, but *defence* (with *c*) and *defensive*, (with *s*?) And so of the other changes which Dr. W. suggested. He did not, as has been affirmed, assume to *dictate* what changes of this sort should be made, but only suggested, as certainly his long and earnest study and investigation of the subject entitled him to suggest; certain modifications, important in his opinion, to carry out existing analogies, and secure greater regularity.

The American public have, to a very great degree, sanctioned his principles. Worcester himself, not guided by any system or principles of his own, but seeking to fall in with the constantly changing practice of the hour, adopted some of them, and then, through his publishers, decries the rest.

"It has been taken for granted that a fixed standard of spelling exists in England, to which we are bound to conform, and passionate appeals have been heard about corrupting the purity of English spelling. This is not the fact. No fixed way of spelling numerous words is known in England. The leading Reviews, the Quarterly and the *Edinboro'*, spell many words in different ways in different numbers, and even in different articles of the same number. The same is the case with distinguished writers. Mr. Macaulay has his way of spelling certain words, which way does not conform to that of the majority of the English writers. Walter Savage Landor, who writes pure and vigorous English, has methods still more diverse from this usage. Archdeacon Hare goes far beyond Webster in certain liberties which he takes. Worcester does not follow, nor does he represent, as to many words, the spelling most commonly received in England, but in these classes mentioned above, and also as to individual words, he adopts the peculiarities of Webster."—See Prof. Porter's Argument.

"It is also to be remembered that the spelling of the words to which any objection has been anticipated, is given not in a single, but in a *double form*; so that a choice is left between the two. The person who opens to one of those words, finds it spelled after two methods, each of which is given in the same type, as they stand side by side. He is informed, indeed, that the lexicographer prefers and recommends one above the other; but he is also told, that there are those who spell the word after another method, and he can take his choice."

It is not surprising that gentlemen who received their educational training many years since, and became accustomed to the then prevalent modes of spelling, should not readily change their habits in that respect, however valid the reasons for a change. Yet, as with Mr. Irving, most persons, unless having bestowed particular attention to the subject, are not very systematic in their own practice, and if authors, their printer more frequently decides this point in their works.

The ridiculous parade of names of distinguished authors, who, it is affirmed, follow Worcester's orthography, will be appreciated, when it is remembered, that by far the largest proportion of the writings of nearly every one of those gentlemen appeared before Worcester's larger Dictionary was issued! So that instead of their "following Worcester invariably," Worcester, with no system or principles of his own, seeks to "follow" them. Its publishers say, "Take for instance, the works of Hon. DANIEL WEBSTER." Very well, Mr. Webster says, over his own signature, that Webster is

"THE MOST COMPLETE, ACCURATE AND RELIABLE DICTIONARY OF THE LANGUAGE."

In another letter to the publishers—

"Dr. Webster's Dictionary is a work of extraordinary merit and value."

And in another still—

"IT IS AN INVALUABLE WORK. I possess many dictionaries, and of most of the learned and cultivated languages, ancient and modern. But I never feel that I am armed and equipped in this respect, without Dr. Webster at command."

If he "follows" Worcester, therefore, it must be afar off.

The leading Series of School Books issued in this country, conform to Webster's Orthography, and the periodical press and Book Publishers are more and more conforming to the same standard. We append a few testimonials on this point.

"The *Orthography* of several classes of words, instead of following cumbrous and obsolete modes of spelling, is conformed to the present usage of the best writers; and the *definitions* have a character of discrimination, copiousness, perspicuity, and accuracy, not found, we believe, in any other dictionary of the English language.

Leonard Woods, Prof. Theological Sem., Andover. Moses Stuart, Prof. of Sac. Lit., Andover. Ralph Emerson, Prof. Eccl. Hist., Andover. L. Ives Hoadley, Teacher Sac. Rhet., Andover. Joshua Bates, D. D., President of Middlebury College. John Hough, Prof. Languages. William C. Fowler, Prof. Chem. and Nat. Hist., Middlebury College. Edward Turner, Prof. Math. and Nat. Philos., Middlebury College. Jeremiah Day, S. T. D., LL. D., Pres. Yale College. Simeon Baldwin, late Judge of the Superior Court. David Daggett, LL. D., Prof. Law, Yale College, and Judge Superior Court. Benjamin Silliman, M. D., LL. D., Prof. Chem., &c., Yale College. Rev. Nathaniel W. Taylor, S. T. D., Prof. Didactic Theology, Yale College. James L. Kingsley, A. M., Prof. Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, Yale College. Rev. Leonard Bacon, D. D. Denison Olmsted, Prof. Math. and Nat. Philos., Yale College."

"The principles of *orthography* adopted are such, on the whole, as are either allowed by good use, or are fast working their way into favor. The objections which have been felt and expressed against Webster's Dictionary we think have been fairly removed by the corrections of Professor Goodrich.

In all other respects, it has never had a rival. In the completeness of the vocabulary, the fullness and precision of its definitions, its learned solution of the true source of words, and its apt and copious authorities, it is a work of amazing labor and scholarship, which has made English lexicography an entirely new thing. \* \* \* \* By far the cheapest, most beautiful, and most useful lexicon of our language that can be obtained."—*Biblical Repository*, January, 1848.

"There is no Dictionary but this of Webster's that can be adopted as a standard. We can not refrain from expressing a hope that our brethren of the type—the printers and editors of newspapers especially—will adopt the ORTHOGRAPHY of Dr. Webster. In this respect, the printers have no standard. It is time they had."—*Boston Courier*, December 20, 1847."

"In ORTHOGRAPHY, the changes proposed by Dr. Webster, which have not been sanctioned by general adoption, and which seem to be too violent departures from the general spelling, have been judiciously omitted, in the present revised edition, while real and important improvements have been wisely retained."

"Theodore Frelinghuysen, Chan. Univ. N. York. William H. Campbell, Editor N. Y. Dis. School Jour. George N. Briggs, Governor Mass. William B. Calhoun, Sec. State Mass. Richard S. Rust, Com. Com. Schools N. Hampshire. Theodore F. King, Sup. Schools N. Jersey. Robert C. Winthrop, Speaker U. S. House Rep. Edmund Burke, Com. Patents. John Young, Gov. New York. Christopher Morgan, Sec. State, and Sup. Com. Schools, N. York. Rev. Samuel H. Cox, D. D. Lyman Beecher, D. D. Pres. Lane Seminary. Calvin E. Stowe, D. D., Prof. Lane Seminary. D. H. Allen, Lane Seminary. Rev. Heman Humphrey, D. D., late Pres. Am. College. Rev. Ezra Keller, D. D., Pres. Wittenburg Coll., Ohio. M. A. Diehl, Prof. Wittenburg Coll., Ohio. N. A. Gieger, Wittenburg Coll., Ohio. Benjamin Labaree, D. D., Pres. Middlebury College; and other distinguished gentlemen.

"Our readers are aware of our partiality for this work, for they must have perceived that we use its ORTHOGRAPHY without scruple. We are pledged to that, both because we approve it, and, we confess, because of a little national prejudice for the work."—*National Magazine for April*, 1853.

### WORCESTER'S ORTHOGRAPHY

We have sufficiently adverted to. Following neither the English usage, nor the American Standard, it may properly be called the *hybrid* system, (see Webster on Hybrid)—neither fish nor flesh; not conformed to ancient custom, of good old Chaucer's day, nor yet the Elizabethan age; nor yet believing, with Webster, that "the tendency of our language to greater simplicity and broader analogies, ought to be watched and cherished with the utmost care."

### 3. WEBSTER--PRONUNCIATION.

"Two methods of pronunciation prevail in England, as in this country—the one, extreme, artificial, and affected, which is adopted by actors, and inculcated by some orthopists and professed teachers of elocution;—the other, that which is in actual use among men of rank and cultivation, which is heard in Parliament, at the Bar, from the Pulpit, and in the circles of polite society. Of these methods, Walker represents the first, Webster the second. In proof of this assertion, I allege first of all, the testimony of Dr. Webster himself, who risked the whole of his little property, made a voyage to England, and resided there for the express purpose, among other objects, of learning by actual experiment and inquiry, what was the true pronunciation of the language by those who ought to be the standard. He had certainly no interest in being mistaken, or in insisting upon notions of his own on such a subject. I adduce also the testimony of Prof. Goodrich himself, who is known by all not to be deficient in nicety of taste, in accuracy of ear, or in the importance which he attaches to an elegant and finished elocution. Prof. Goodrich says in the MS. before me, 'After a diligent study of the subject for the last thirty years, after visiting England with a view to satisfy my own mind by inquiries on the spot, after a correspondence with distinguished English scholars continued down to the present time, I feel authorized to say, that the Revised Edition of Dr. Webster's Dictionary does exhibit the actual pronunciation of our language in England, as accurately

and completely as any single Dictionary which has ever been published.' 'In the same edition important modifications have been likewise made, as the result of an extensive correspondence with distinguished scholars in England and this country, bringing down the work to the year 1847.' 'It may therefore be safely assumed, that Walker, in respect to his leading peculiarities, as enumerated above, **IS NOT THE STANDARD OF PRONUNCIATION IN ENGLAND.** As to the main body of words in our language, there is no dispute. All orthoepists agree in respect to them, and Walker has drawn out the rules and exceptions on this subject with prodigious labor. This has given him a deserved reputation. But his peculiarities have been rejected. They resulted partly from the habits of his early life; for Smart, a distinguished living orthoepist, says, 'Walker, I am informed, was a *Yorkshire man*, and the information must be correct,' &c. They resulted also in part from his taking the pronunciation of the stage and of fashionable life in London as his guide, and not the pronunciation of the great body of well-educated men. [So that Walker's pronunciation is a *cross* from the cockney dialect and the dialect of a Yorkshire man.] Peculiar circumstances have given him a reputation in this country far greater than he ever possessed in England. Two distinguished English gentlemen (one of whom belonged to the nobility) were asked (by a gentleman of the highest literary authority in Eastern Massachusetts) while traveling in this country, whether Walker was considered in England as the standard of pronunciation. After hesitating for a moment and requesting that the name might be repeated, they both frankly declared that **THEY HAD NEVER SEEN HIS DICTIONARY, OR HEARD IT SPOKEN OF AS AUTHORITY.** And yet school books of all sorts, from the spelling book upward, have been brought into use in opposition to Webster's, on the sole ground that they are based on Walker as a standard, and Worcester's chief peculiarity is, that he retains so much of Walker.

"But on this subject we have the decision and incontestable testimony of facts. 'The Imperial Dictionary,' to which I have before referred, is a large and expensive work, designed for extensive circulation in England, and is professedly 'based upon Webster.' Upon its preparation much labor has been bestowed, and it is designed, as its title implies, for circulation as the Dictionary of the British empire. **A STRICT EXAMINATION OF THIS DICTIONARY SHOWS THAT THE PRONUNCIATION OF WEBSTER IS RETAINED IN EVERY PARTICULAR,** even in those in which Webster differs from the prevailing English usage. Not only is this the case, but even Webster's **NOTATION** is adopted, and figured type have been cast expressly for the work, like those used by him. This is not all. In a long and elaborate Introduction, the editors present an extended argument, almost in Dr. Webster's words, to show that Walker is not and never was authority in England. What argument is stronger than that furnished by these facts? Is it credible that if Webster's pronunciation is defective or vicious, if it fails to represent that in actual use in England, is it credible that it would be adopted, notation and all, in a work that is to find its sale in England? This one fact must silence forever these objections.

"The main differences between the pronunciation of Webster and that of Worcester, besides those in which Worcester follows Walker, are, that Worcester attempts to indicate the nice and intermediate shading of the vowel sounds, and also the sounds of the unaccented syllables. A foreign gentleman who has given attention to all the languages of continental Europe, and is qualified to judge, has told me repeatedly, that there are twenty different sounds of *a*, distinguishable by his ear, as uttered in different English words. These changes of sound can not be indicated by any notation. Worcester attempts too much. His system is complex. It can not easily be understood, remembered, and applied. It will induce perpetual confusion, and awkwardness, and mistake, in the schools in which it is applied. Webster has the good sense to attempt no more than can be easily applied, and which, if used, will guide the scholar aright. In confirmation of all these remarks, I adduce the unexpected testimony, in the words of Dr. Webster, of the edition of the Imperial Dictionary, (Introduction, p. xliv.)

"We are persuaded that there are **ten** differences among the orthoepists, where there is **ONE** in the actual pronunciation of respectable people in England; and in most of them the notation, if strictly followed, will lead to **TEN** differences of pronunciation where **ONE** only now exists in actual practice.

"This effect of multiplying doubts and diversities has resulted from very obvious causes.

"**1.** The limited acquaintance of orthoepists with the general usage, and their taking the pronunciation of London or some dialect or local practice in that city, for the **best usage**.

"**2.** The difficulty or rather impracticability, of representing sounds, and nice distinctions of sound, on paper; especially in unaccented syllables.

"**3.** The partiality of authors for the practice of particular speakers, either stage-players or others, which would lead them to denominate that the **best** practice which had been adopted by their favorites.

"**4.** A spirit of fastidious hypercriticism, which has led writers to make minute distinctions, that are liable to be disputed, and which tend only to perplex the inquirer, and generate uncertainty or diversity, when no essential difference had previously existed in practice.' —*Prof. Porter's Argument.*

#### WORCESTER--PRONUNCIATION.

"This subject the compiler has painfully elaborated, and the results are placed at the command of the reader. He has not merely given the results of his own investigations and inquiries, by indicating what he supposes to be the usage of those esteemed as authorities; nor has he, where authorities are divided, and as it were, equally balanced, given the two or three methods, with the authority on which each depends; but he has collected and attached to every important word, every method of pronouncing it that has ever been recommended by a writer, whether great or small, conceited or well-informed, judicious or affected. In this way he has gathered more curious information on this subject than can be found in any other work; which will be highly esteemed by all literary antiquarians, students of the 'curiosities' of English pronunciation, and hunters after odd ways of affected utterance. We doubt the propriety or the good taste, however, of attaching this variety to a diction ary designed for common use; a dictionary which, from its size and pretensions, is intended to an

swer questions directly and briefly to the popular mind, rather than to be a thesaurus of the materials from which opposite usages may be defended, and nice questions may be laboriously adjusted. What is wanted in such a dictionary is the good usage of educated and sensible people in England and America—not the ultra and impracticable affectations of the *salon*, nor the stiff and studied over-doing of the actor, or the professed doctor of pronunciation; not the refined nor the coarse cockneyisms of the *cit*, nor again the negligent and vulgar provincialisms of Old or New England; but the actual use of the intelligent and refined who speak the English language. Greater deference is to be yielded to English usage, under certain circumstances, than to the American, but not to such an extent as is sometimes claimed; least of all is that which is not the English usage of the truly intelligent and judicious to be insisted on, because it is observed by the affected Englishman. To do this, as was done by Walker, and as is done to a limited extent by Worcester, is to commit the mistake of the importer of the latest fashion, who gives the coat, the cravat, the hat or the boots, of the London dandy, rather than those of the English gentleman. If we are to err in either direction, we had rather err from provincial ignorance than from mistakes of affected imitators. Let our errors be those of well-meaning but simple rustics, rather than those of the *traveled fool*.”—*American Review*.

Prof. Goodrich remarks, in his Preface to the revised edition of Webster Unabridged, that “in the progress of these labors, the Editor has been frequently struck with the wisdom of Dr. Webster in not attempting too much as to marking the pronunciation.” You will be struck with this in noticing Worcester’s method. He marks, usually, every vowel. ~~But~~ But nearly or quite one-half of the vowels so marked, have the character under them, to signify that its sound is *obscure*, i. e., the author could not describe it. Open to any page:—*Nar-row-ly*—the *a* short—*o* and *y* obscure; *na-tiv-i-ty*, *i* short, *a*, second *i* and *y* obscure. And so through the book. Now why attempt to mark at all, letters, the exact sound of which you are confessedly unable to give? Does not this perplex, and not enlighten the learner?

Worcester often gives, as his first pronunciation, one *not* in accordance with the best usage. Thus for *ink*, *thank*, *frank*, &c., he gives *ingk*, *thangk*, *frangk*,—introducing a vitiated pronunciation; for *shone*, *shon*, for *clerk*, *klark*, &c.

“From land to land it glanced, from zone to zone,  
Gladened each heart, in full effulgence *shon*.”

“Toiling, toiling at his work,  
Decent, delving, dapper *klark*.”

The sun *shon* brightly upon the vast *kongkors*, and the cheers of the assemblage went up like *frangkinsens* to the excited orator, as he *thangkt* them for their attention, and exhorted them faithfully to *gy-ard* their liberties; that our beloved country might be a *gy-ide* to the oppressed, and a light to *manky-ind*, and the *klark* below, dipping his pen in his *ingk*, *frangkly* declared his inability to follow the speaker in his pronunciation *a la Worcester*.

#### 4. THE VOCABULARY.

It is claimed for Worcester that its vocabulary has great copiousness. Here, certainly, originality, if no other merit, may be claimed.

“It may be proper to notice for a moment the kind of words which are included in this vocabulary. Take the following as specimens of hundreds if not of thousands. Notelet, Epistolet, Impossibilification, Deathify, to Facsimile, Rumgumtious, Circumbendibus, Cantankerous, Dandify, Dirtpie, Defectionist, Dyssyllabification, Serauky, Scriggle, Scrimption, Scruff, Shopocracy, Squirearchy, Transmogrification, Fiddlefaddler, Grammatication, Sapientize, Squeezable, Thundery, Unstrangulable, Unleisureness, Wegotism, Weism, Fish-Pash, Perfectionation, Jiggumbob, Intersomnious, Potentiate, Perfectibilian, Sententious, Melliloquent, Unsufficingness, Widowerhood, Serimption, Polysyllabicism, Scriblement, Unindifferency, Inopportunity, Solivagous. Many more might be added.”

“That the public may become acquainted” with the vocabulary of Worcester in all its richness, “the following illustration is taken from that judicious paper, the Boston Mercantile Journal”:

“I read with interest the scriblement of ‘Amen’ in the Daily Journal of the 11th, in which he justly exposes Dr. Webster as a *rumgumtious* and *pretentious Innovationist* in spelling. His arguments are somewhat *incoherentific*, but their *strengthfulness* must show the *unsufficingness* of Dr. W.’s pretensions to be a *perfectibilian*, and must render them *uninfluencive* upon the *shopocracy* of the North, and the *plantocracy* and *squirearchy* of the South. The writer has done well to *guardianize* the public against the *transmogrification* of *plough* into *plow*, as spelled by the *inperiwigged* Dr. Johnson. The *modificability* of English spelling into any *perfectionation*, could only be thought of by a *somnitive professionalist*, and an *intersomnious inspirationist*. To *regularize* and *sapientize* our *grammatication*, must *territorialize* and *sectionize* the universal Yankee nation, and render

their dialect *solivagous*, and end in the *impossibilification* of a *voyageable* *politicalism*. I hope your correspondent will take another *circumbendibus* to *deathify* Dr. Webster, as it will enable me to *marvellize* and *soberize* the public by another selection of *melliloquent* words, such as those in Italics, all which are drawn from that incorrupted fountain of pure English, Worcester's Dictionary.

FIDDLE-FADDLER.

P. S. *Transcribblers*, who appropriate such solemn appellations as *Amen*, should not forget to inform the public, that in the new edition of Webster's Dictionary, the spelling is, in most instances, given in the usual as well as the new form, to avoid the objections of *researchful illiberalism*.

If the views we have presented to you on the different points in which the two systems of Webster and Worcester are in contrast, are in the main correct (and we are sure they are essentially so)—if Worcester abounds in unauthorized words in his Vocabulary, if his Definitions fail in completeness, precision, and accuracy, if his Orthography is without system, and his Pronunciation sometimes affected—need we ask, which series of Dictionaries will an intelligent teacher or parent, desire to place before the pupils or children of his charge? We know your own views. We have reason to feel assured, also, that they are the unbiased and unprejudiced views of the great mass of teachers through the country.

We only solicit a full and candid investigation as to the merits of *Webster's Dictionaries*, and that impressions be not too readily taken from the distorted caricatures and untruthful misrepresentations of *researchful illiberalism*, and “interested parties.” A Dictionary, of all other human literary productions, is, necessarily but an approximation to accuracy and completeness, and of course is a fair subject of candid criticism. Then, too, on some points the opinions of educated men are diametrically opposed—some ultra conservative, utterly rejecting all progress; others in the opposite extreme of radicalism. When, however, the opponents of Webster shall be able to point to an English Dictionary, better, as a whole, than his, it will be time enough for them to decry the American lexicographer. It is at present the general judgment of the English and American public that this can not be done.

We would say, in conclusion, that we should think it a very poor mercantile principle, to decry the wares of others, to secure a market for our own; certainly, Dr. Webster's works do not require the practice of any literary quackery of this sort. Nor can it be deemed a very high order of criticism, to throw into one paragraph, in strange juxtaposition, a confused mass of words from a Dictionary, peculiar for their orthography or pronunciation. It may “make the unthinking laugh, but the judicious grieve.” Yet you will notice from such arts the kind of criticism to which Dr. W's works are subjected.

We will only add that the **DEFINITIONS** in Webster's **SCHOOL DICTIONARIES** are taken from his large work, and combine the same excellences, in this and other features, as does the latter.

Truly yours,

G. & C. MERRIAM.

We briefly recapitulate the points which go to substantiate the fact that we have,

## A NATIONAL STANDARD!

# WEBSTER'S QUARTO DICTIONARY.

THE ENTIRE WORK UNABRIDGED.

WHY IT IS THE STANDARD WORK OF THE LANGUAGE.

1. It contains *THREE TIMES* the matter found in any other English Dictionary compiled in this country; and yet, in the language of an eminent critic, “its definitions are models of *CONDENSATION* and *PURITY*. Its *vocabulary* of authorized words is more complete than any other.

Of Worcester's Dictionary (hardly more than one-fourth the size of Webster's) a ripe scholar remarks: “Much has been said of the copiousness of his vocabulary. It may be proper to notice the kind of words which are included in this. Take the following as specimens of hundreds, if not of thousands. Notelet, Epistolet, Impossibilification, Deathify, To Facsimile, Rumgumtious, Circumbendibus, Cantankerous, Dandify, Dirtpie, Defectionist, Dyssyllabification, Scranyak, Scriggle, Scrimption, Seruff, Shopocracy, Squirearchy.”

2. In its *Definitions* (the object for which, nine cases in ten, reference is made to a Dictionary) it is universally conceded to be superior to every other. In this respect, Dr. Webster stands unrivaled and alone; while in Worcester, “the meaning is more commonly conveyed by a loose and general

description, and then a number of words, nearly equivalent follow." Erroneous or false definitions, also, into which Dr. Webster was led, in his first editions, but subsequently corrected in the present REVISED EDITION, are found in Worcester: as "*Post-Note*" Webster defined, originally "a bank-note transmitted by mail," or *post*; so Worcester, "a cash note to be sent by *post*"—a sense in which the word is never used; a *post-note* being a note payable *posterior* to, or after, its date.

3. Its *Pronunciation* more truly represents established good usage, in this country and Great Britain, than any other. In the *Imperial Dictionary*, a work of the highest authority, recently published in London, THE PRONUNCIATION OF WEBSTER IS RETAINED IN EVERY PARTICULAR; even Webster's *notation* is adopted, and figured type have been cast expressly for the work, like those used by him.

Worcester often gives, as his first pronunciation, one *not* in accordance with the best usage. Thus, for *ink*, *thank*, *frank*; he gives *ingk*, *thangk*, *frangk*—introducing a vitiated pronunciation; for *shone*, *shon*, for *clerk*, *klark*, &c.

4 In *Orthography*, Dr. Webster's system, as contained in our Revised Edition, is followed by a very great proportion of the Spelling Books, Reading Books, and Elementary Works, used in the schools throughout the United States. Where good usage sanctions more than one form—as *center*, *centre*; *defense*, *defence*—both are given. Worcester himself has followed Dr. Webster in spelling *maniac*, *logic*, &c., without a *k*; *favor*, *flavor*, &c., without a *u*; and now his publishers vilify the name of Webster, and seek to detract from the reputation of his Great National Work. Hon. DANIEL WEBSTER does *not* "follow Worcester." Some of his recently published works follow Dr. Webster, and others vary from him, as his different publishers incline. He has expressly declared his opinion, over his own signature, that Webster's is "THE MOST COMPLETE, ACCURATE, AND RELIABLE DICTIONARY OF THE LANGUAGE."

*Washington Irving repudiates* Worcester, since he declares London usage is his standard, which varies greatly from Worcester. A full and satisfactory reply was made to a letter of Mr. Irving, recently published, and no right-minded man would refuse to accompany the one with the other. The works of Sparks, Bancroft, Bryant, &c., were mostly published before Worcester's large Dictionary was issued, and of course did *not* "follow" it. Bryant says of Webster: "It is a mine of philological research and erudition—a *thesaurus* of the English Language."

5. In its *Etymologies*, Webster is conceded to be superior to every other work.

6. Its pre-eminence over every other English Dictionary is admitted in GREAT BRITAIN, and all other countries than our own, where the English Language is spoken. The proof of this is ample. There have recently appeared in England three new Dictionaries, all of which have borrowed very largely from Webster. The "Imperial," the most elaborate and costly, issued in two volumes of one thousand pages each, is not only based upon it, but boldly avows the fact in its prospectus. It is in truth a mere *reprint* of the second edition of Webster; and the editor, in his Introduction, remarks, that the propriety of doing this "will be obvious, when we reflect that IT IS ACKNOWLEDGED, BOTH IN THIS COUNTRY AND IN AMERICA, TO BE THE MOST COPIOUS AND MOST EXCELLENT AT PRESENT IN CIRCULATION." Worcester's is of no authority there, never cited, and almost wholly unknown.

7. The same is hardly less emphatically true in this country. In MASSACHUSETTS, where Worcester was compiled and published, the Legislature having offered to each School District, with no cost to the District in either case, and nothing to control its choice but the merits of the works, a copy of Webster or Worcester, at its option, THREE THOUSAND AND FIFTY-FIVE of the Districts, within the first few months, ordered WEBSTER, and but one hundred and five took Worcester—THIRTY TO ONE selecting Webster as their STANDARD WORK.

IN NEW YORK, legislative provision having been made for a similar measure, nearly NINE THOUSAND copies of Webster have been ordered. Worcester was not once proposed or thought of.

Nearly every State Superintendent in the Union has recommended Webster in the strongest terms.

☞ We regret that gratuitous and unprovoked assaults by interested parties, upon Dr. Webster's labors, which have conferred national honor upon us abroad, render necessary statements of facts of a controversial character.

☞ New and Revised Editions of Webster's School Dictionaries have recently been issued, in handsome style, with tables of Geographical, Scripture, and Greek and Latin Proper Names, forming the best PRONOUNCING AND DEFINING School Dictionaries of the Language.

☞ Dr. Webster's Educational Works, it is believed, have done more to secure the uniformity of Pronunciation and use of language, and freedom from Provincialisms, so remarkable in this country, especially when the great influx of foreigners from all nations is considered, than any other cause.

☞ The attention of the friends of popular education, superintendents, teachers, and parents, is solicited to the importance of perpetuating this purity by the use of such a NATIONAL STANDARD.

G. & C. MERRIAM,  
SPRINGFIELD, MASS.,

Publishers of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary.

We take the following from a letter recently received from a distinguished teacher in Eastern Massachusetts:—

" ————— April 13, 1853.

MESSRS. G. & C. MERRIAM,

GENTLEMEN:—\* \* \* \* \* I have no doubt of its being the Dictionary of the English Language, when Worcester shall be remembered only as an *unworthy* and *unjust* speculation of the past.

Webster's Spelling Book was the class book of my earlier days, and the memory of it is still pleasant, from the Frontispiece, with its Temple of Knowledge, to "Finis."

In later years I came in possession of Webster's smaller School Dictionary, and the feeling of exultation with which I looked over its pages is with me yet. In the language of a justly celebrated teacher of New Hampshire, there was no "tshuing" then, but simple

common sense, founded on the use and derivation of the words, in spelling and pronunciation.

Some fourteen or fifteen years since I looked over Webster's Octavo Dictionary with MARSHALL S. RICH, Esq., (for more than twenty-five years *an eminent successful teacher* in Newton Center, Mass.) and he selected something more than one hundred words, I should think, the spelling of which was simplified, as compared with *Walker*, and sent them to the Editor of the 'Boston Cultivator,' and they appeared in the columns of that paper, with a note commanding Webster's Dictionary. (I think I am right in the name of the paper. I know I am in the fact.)

About that time or soon after, I heard of Worcester's Dictionary. The story came to me thus, viz.—that Worcester was at once the pupil and assistant of Webster, and seeing that he, Webster, had taken a step in advance of the age, though not in advance of truth, and also that Walker was "behind the time," treacherously went to work, catering to the Walkerian taste of the day, and produced this "bastard dictionary."

Since then, year after year I have watched the *unscrupulous measures* with which the Publishers of Worcester have pressed their claims to public attention and patronage. Striving to defame the fair renown of Webster in their flagitious attempts to 'fill their pockets' by foisting a comparatively worthless book upon the public. Editions of all sizes, all prices, and no *prices* have been scattered through the community, placed in the hands of teachers, committees, &c., in order to get them introduced into schools.

\* \* \* I am *not of age* in the school-keeping business, yet, as this is but my *eighteenth* year of teaching (not 21st,) six of which I have passed in connection with the Public High School in this place.

\* \* \* \* The 'whining' of Worcester's advocates is with regard to the spelling and pronunciation of a few words, which use is every year rendering nearer and nearer, and will soon completely render, Websterian, for the road to reach it is nothing in comparison to that already passed. And in *defining*, Webster is *infinitely pre-eminent*. When you touch on this point, they are either *mum*, or yield the point at once.

Respectfully and truly yours,

“

From the *National Magazine* for April, 1853, (published at the *Methodist Book Concern*, 200 Mulberry St., New York.)

"Webster's *Dictionary*, the entire work unabridged, in 1 vol., crown quarto, of one thousand four hundred and fifty-two pages, containing the last improvements of Dr. Webster, and the additions of Professor Goodrich. Our readers are aware of our partiality for this work, for they must have perceived that we use its Orthography without scruple. We are pledged to that, both because we approve it, and, we confess, because of a little national prejudice for the work. Webster's *definitions* are unrivaled; the merit of the work in this respect is enough to settle its claims; he was the best etymologist that ever attempted to define our language. Such provincial words as are necessary to Dictionary readers, have been admitted into the present edition with proper discriminations. Some of Webster's more violent orthographical peculiarities have been omitted.

The *Pronunciation* is marked by a simple and excellent system of notation, and in difficult cases, words are re-spelled. The lists of Scriptural, Classical, and Geographical names are very full—the latter more so than we have seen in any Dictionary; it comprises twelve or thirteen thousand names. Every American student, and, as far as possible, every American family, should possess this great standard of our language."

From the *Pittsburg Christian Advocate*, April 9, 1853.

"This is now the acknowledged standard of the English language, wherever spoken. England has laid aside her great Johnson for the American Webster. The English press generally, has admitted the 'American Dictionary' to be the best extant. Dr. Thomas Dick, than whom no living or modern transatlantic writer, is better known, or more generally read, in this country, says, 'This Dictionary is undoubtedly the most complete Dictionary of the English language that has been published, and *ages will elapse* before any other Dictionary of that language will be required.' He declares it *in every respect far superior* to Johnson's large Dictionary. It is indorsed and strongly recommended by the most eminent names which adorn American literature. It ought to obtain a universal circulation. Every school-house, academy and college, every professional office, every reading room, every library in the land, should contain a copy of Webster's large Dictionary. All who aspire to speak or write the English language with accuracy and force, will find this work an indispensable auxiliary. To the young who are aiming at self-culture and self-im-

provement, it will be of the greatest value. A constant and careful reference to it will tend to form intellectual habits of much importance, as to accuracy, discrimination, and condensation of thought; for the work is remarkable for these properties, as well as for purity of language. Nor is it merely a book of words, as young people sometimes imagine a Dictionary to be. It is, in fact, an encyclopedia of knowledge, 'All young persons,' says the *Phrenological Journal*, 'should have a standard Dictionary at their elbow; and while you are about it, *get the best*; that Dictionary is Noah Webster's—*the great work unabridged*. If you are too poor, save the amount from off your back, to put it into your head.' This is true doctrine. If you do not mean to spell wrong, read wrong, speak wrong, write wrong—go halting and blundering intellectually, as long as you live—buy **WEBSTER'S LARGE DICTIONARY**; and when you have it, *use it*."

*From the Presbyterian of the West, March 21, 1853.*

"NOAH WEBSTER, the best orthoepist and linguist of his age in this country, and perhaps without a superior in these departments in Europe, spent the greater part of a long and industrious life, in arranging and perfecting this master-work. Since the author's death, in 1843, it has been carefully examined, revised and stereotyped; and as now presented to the American people, is confessedly without an equal as a definier, in amplitude and correctness. In its way as a *BOOK*, it stands *out* bold and prominent to the American mind, and to the learned world, without a comparable rival—aptly symbolizing in many respects the greatness and superiority of the country from which it emanates; for as this country in coming time promises to exert a controlling influence in shaping and molding the political destinies of the world—so this book will, we think, over the same minds exert its power in reducing to a harmonious unity of language and speech the 'confusion of tongues' which now exists."

*From the New York (Catholic) Freeman's Journal.*

\* \* \* "But, of Dictionaries, what one? We have been educated in the contempt and horror of Noah Webster's on the ground that it is an innovation; that it makes havoc of the fine old language of Shakspeare and Milton, of Bacon and Hooker, and all the rest of those old worthies. \* \* \* But we have noticed more and more, during the last twelve or fifteen years, that not only in this country, but wherever the English language is spoken, most of the changes that were advocated by Webster, have been gaining in authority and becoming **THE STANDARD METHOD OF SPELLING**. This has given us occasion to reconsider the notions of our early training. \* \* \* Our good opinion of the work has so grown on acquaintance that it is only inadvertence, at moments when we have had opportunity, that has prevented us from purchasing a copy of it. \* \* \* We have spent some few hours in examining it, and have found some of our remaining objections to it as a standard, very satisfactorily answered."

*From the Ladies' Repository, (Meth. Book Room,) Cincinnati, May, 1252.*

"We have found the work an indispensable auxiliary in our editorial labors, and except the Bible, it is the last book we should feel willing to part with."

*From the Watchman and Observer, Richmond, Va., March 3, 1853.*

"It is now, we believe, generally admitted among English scholars, that there is no Dictionary of the language superior to Webster's—none more full—none more exact in its definitions, and none more reliable as a **STANDARD**."

*From the Crawford County Journal, Nov. 24, 1852.*

"This work has been adopted as the **STANDARD**, not only in this country, but in England, and for accuracy of Definition, and faithfulness in tracing out the various shades of meaning of words, it has no equal, and is probably the only full and complete Dictionary of our language extant."

### 'Get the Best.'

'All young persons should have a standard

## DICTIONARY,

at their elbows. And while you are about it, *get the best*; that Dictionary is

**NOAH WEBSTER'S,**

The *great work unabridged*. If you are too poor, save the amount from off your back, to put it into your head.—*Phrenolog. Journal*.

### Webster's Quarto Dictionary Unabridged.

"We believe we shall be certain of doing a service to the people of the State, if we say a word or two upon the Unabridged Quarto Dictionary of the English Language, by Noah Webster. The word UNABRIDGED has been purposely employed, because if such a work is wanted for any but the very lowest uses—those of mere orthography, or orthoepy—it can not be too copious and comprehensive. When one is ignorant of the proper and precise powers of a word, he can not endure to be turned over to an abridgment that gives him a SYNONYM, instead of a definition; but he demands to know as much as anybody knows of its history or etymology, and its different shades of meaning. Then only can he employ it with confidence and effect, as a mighty weapon for the expression of intellect or passion."—*Newark Daily Advertiser, March 25, 1851.*

"A Dictionary is the last book which a scholar ever wants to have abridged, the process being sure to cut off THE VERY MATTER WHICH HE MOST VALUES."—*Chro-*  
*notype.*

**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE.**—"We must pay this compliment to Webster's QUARTO DICTIONARY,—it contains scientific terms not to be found in any other work, and we have often been surprised to find that it contained full and clear definitions of many technical phrases, which we thought had never been outside of the workshop. It is a real *Encyclopedia of Science*, for it not only gives the definitions of scientific terms, but describes the nature of many chemical actions, and the operation of many machines. In its *unabridged* present form, it is complete, and no man pretending to scientific knowledge can be without it. In Chemistry, Architecture, Geology, Engineering, Mechanics, &c., &c., it is full and accurate, and is not only essential to the student in science, but to the most erudite philosopher. We are proud of this work as an American production; it is certainly gratifying to know and feel that England looks to America as having now produced the standard work of the English language."—*Scientific American, Oct. 4, 1851.*

**"WEBSTER'S QUARTO DICTIONARY.**—Everybody knows about Webster's Dictionary, and every man, woman, and child, ought to have access to it.

It will tell you everything in regard to your mother tongue, which you want to know. It shows you the words in all their aspects—giving you a sort of history of each individual, that is in any way worthy of attention—developing their powers and delineating their features and general appearance so precisely, that the unlearned will remember them, after the first sight, and know who they are and what they are, whenever he meets them. A MAN WHO WOULD KNOW EVERYTHING, OR ANYTHING, AS HE OUGHT TO KNOW, MUST OWN WEBSTER'S LARGE DICTIONARY. It is a great light, and he that will not avail himself of it, must walk in darkness. Every young housekeeper should lay it in, to occupy the place which was formerly filled with dancers and wine glasses.

Every farmer should give his sons two or three square rods of ground, well prepared, with the avails of which they may buy it. Every mechanic should put a receiving box in some conspicuous place in the house, to catch the stray pennies, for the like purpose.

Lay it upon your table by the side of the Bible—it is a better expounder than many which claim to be expounders.

It is a great labor-saver—it has saved us time enough in one year's use to pay for itself: and that must be deemed good property, which will clear itself once a year. If you have any doubt about the precise meaning of the word *clear*, in the last sentence, look at Webster's thirteen definitions of the v. t."—*Massachusetts Life Boat, April 28, 1852.*

*From an American Missionary in South Africa.*

"Umsunduzi, Port Natal, March 11, 1852.

To MESSRS. G. & C. MERRIAM:

Dear Sirs,—The four copies of Webster's Quarto Dictionary which you had the great liberality to forward to the South African Mission, by the Secretaries of the American Board, were duly received some months since, and by appointment of the Mission, I have the honor and pleasure to acknowledge them, and to say to you that we are under many obligations for so many copies of a most invaluable work.

So great is the estimate in which this work is held in this distant English colony, that many of my fellows in labor, Americans and others, and some of the principal officers of the British government, have already procured it, while others, in both public and private life, have sent for it or are about to do so.

His Honor, the Lieutenant Governor, a reputed scholar, calling upon us more than a year since, saw the work, admired, and at once ordered a copy for his own use. About a month since one of the civil magistrates inquired of me where and how he could obtain a copy for himself. And only last week the Honorable the Secretary to Government, a man of much maturity in both years and knowledge, passing a day or two with us, referred several times to Webster's Quarto Dictionary as the highest standard and indisputably the best work of the kind in the English language. Its general merits and marked excellencies are too well known and acknowledged to require of me any enumeration, had I the time to make it.

I will only add a word of my own experience. In 1841, while a student at Yale, having at command only eighteen dollars, and not knowing when or where I could obtain more, I paid five-sixths of what I had for Webster's Dictionary, in two volumes octavo; and dear as it was and with some defects, I can say, after ten years' study and labor, that, save my Bible, I never bought a book to me cheaper, better, or more useful.

But now the same work carefully revised and enlarged, and containing, in addition, the valuable Pronouncing Vocabularies of Scripture, Classical and Geographical names, may be had for half, or less than half the former price.

May every American youth and son of Britain, and every man of letters of every nation, soon have access to it, and become, for the most part, possessors of it. Such is my wish and expectation. Every missionary, every statesman, every man of science and literature, of extensive commerce and true religion, of whatever nation, who knows its value, consults his own interest, and studies to be useful, will endeavor to obtain it, and will find it an invaluable companion in all his pursuits. It has already found its way into the darkest parts of the world, and is exerting a silent, but steady, elevating and powerful influence, directly or indirectly, upon the mind, character and language of every nation under the sun.

In behalf of the American Zulu Mission in Southern Africa, I have the honor to be,  
Respected sirs, most truly yours,

LÉWIS GROUT."

The article (from which an extract is given below) is from the pen of one of our most accurate scholars, acute observers, and devoted friends to schools. [Professor E. D. Sanborn, of Dartmouth College.] *Granite Farmer*, (Manchester, N. H.) Nov. 19, 1851.

"About a year ago, Mr. Merriam, one of the publishers of Webster's Quarto Dictionary, gave to the writer an order for a copy of that work, to be used in some school under my eye, by way of experiment. I took the dictionary and placed it in a tuition school, in the village, composed of pupils varying in age, from four to eighteen years. I visited the school and informed the pupils that the book should be at their service if they would make good use of it. I also expressed a wish that all the scholars who could write, should keep small common-place books, and write down in them every word, which occurred in their lessons, of whose meaning they were in doubt, and hold themselves in readiness to report to their teacher, at any time, the number of words they had thus had occasion to look out in the dictionary. This plan was adopted, and most of the pupils found a use for the new book. The older scholars consulted it quite often, so that there were, sometimes, a number of petitioners at the same time. The dictionary has now been used three terms, and the interest in it is unabated. The pupils have become more interested in finding every word they do not understand. They read with a more intelligent appreciation of their author, and understand better the subjects studied in their text-books. I am satisfied, from this trial, that Webster's Dictionary might be very profitably introduced into all our district schools.

#### IF THE TEACHER IS INTERESTED IN THE USE OF THE DICTIONARY, THE SCHOLARS WILL BE.

It is very easy to call forth the ambition of a whole school by encouraging the use of common-place books for recording both the *words* which are not understood, and their *definitions*. Let it be understood, that these little books are to be exhibited at the examination of the school, and that pupils will be questioned as to the meaning of words which they have recorded in their own books, and there will be no want of interest in using the book. Let it be understood to be highly commendable in every pupil not to pass one word in his lesson which he could not define; and when one member of a class fails to explain a word he has used, let that word be put to all the class, or in case of failure there, to the whole school, and the interest in the book will become so great that instead of one copy, a dozen will be wanted for the use of the school. No one who has examined Webster's Quarto Dictionary can doubt the utility of frequent reference to it. It is almost an Encyclopedia, as well as a book of definitions."

"WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY. We learn from the *Farmer's Cabinet*, of Amherst, N. H., that Hon. CHARLES G. ATHERTON has given a considerable sum to the poor of that town, and has also presented all the school districts with a copy of Webster's royal quarto Dictionary.

If other gentlemen of abundant means in other States would emulate the laudable example of Hon. Mr. Atherton, by presenting to every school district in New England, a copy of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, which has become the standard in Europe and America, the rising generation would have abundant cause to prefix the title of 'Honorable' to the name of each such donor, and each could wear it through life with a consciousness that such title was not misapplied."—*Boston Real Estate Advertiser*, April 2, 1853.

*From the Central New Yorker*, April 8, 1852.

"There have been two Noahs in this world, who have, we trust entered a blessed world to come—the Noah of Diluvian days, who conducted the Representatives of the Living creation over the world of Waters—and the Noah of Modern days, who has navigated the Ark of the English language over the deluge of a world of words.

All other Dictionaries are swamped in the deluge, like the inhabitants of the old world, and no high mountain of distinction, ambition, or pretension has had sufficient altitude to overtop the flood of oblivion that washes them under, and overwhelms them in the silence of death and forgetfulness.

But 'Noah entered the ark with all his house,' and outlived the flood. So Noah Webster and all his faithful followers preserved the Progeny of the English Language, and are rapidly extending it over the *Pagan*, as well as Christian world.

Again, Language has been a gnarled and tangled web, that none could unravel and straighten well, until a *Webster* arose to accomplish the task. Others only made the tangled web the worse, or broke and tore it into shreds and patches, but our *Webster* has analyzed and synthetized it, has unraveled and woven the web into warp and woof, into a beautiful pattern. Noah Webster's Dictionaries are the standard spellers and definers of the English language the world over—soon to be the Court Language of the world."

The *National Intelligencer* of April 19, 1852, says of Webster: "It is the Dictionary of all Dictionaries of the English language, *full* and *precise*, and is the book of all others essential to all professional men, all men of science, all printers, and, indeed, every man who understands the force of words, and the importance of an accurate and perfect knowledge of the vehicle of his own ideas and of the thoughts of others."

## WEBSTER'S SCHOOL DICTIONARIES IN NEW HAMPSHIRE.

 The Board of Education of New Hampshire, at a recent session, [April, 1853.] voted to recommend *Webster's School Dictionaries* for the use of the common schools of New Hampshire.

### ADDITIONAL TESTIMONY FROM THE BOSTON TEACHERS.

In addition to the letters already given from Messrs. PHILBRICK, PARKER and SHEPARD, we are now permitted to subjoin the following:—

From THOMAS SHERWIN, Esq., Principal of the *English High School*, Boston, and author of a popular treatise on *Algebra*.

“Boston, April 26, 1853.

MESSRS. G. & C. MERRIAM,

GENTLEMEN:—I regard WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY as a highly valuable work, and an essential one to every critical scholar; and I think that a copy of it should be accessible to the pupils of all our District, Grammar, and High Schools.

Respectfully Yours, THOMAS SHERWIN.”

From WILLIAM H. SEAVEY, Esq., Principal of the *Eliot School*, Boston.

“Boston, May 10, 1853.

MESSRS. G. & C. MERRIAM:—I am happy to express my full concurrence in Mr. PHILBRICK'S favorable opinion of Webster's *Unabridged Quarto Dictionary*. I subscribe to this opinion after more than four years' *experience and observation* of the effects of its use, in and out of the school-room.

Yours,  
WILLIAM H. SEAVEY.”





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